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NARRATIVE

OF

AN OFFICIAL VISIT

TO

GUATEMALA

FROM

MEXICO.

By G. A. THOMPSON, Esq.

LATE SECRETARY TO HIS BRITANNIC MAJESTY'S MEXICAN COMMISSION, AND COMMISSIONER TO REPORT TO HIS MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT ON THE STATE OF THE CENTRAL REPUBLIC.

LONDON:

JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.

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TO THE

KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

SIRE,

HAVING been the first of YOUR MAJESTY'S subjects who was deputed by the Government to visit Guatemala—a country most interesting in every political and commercial point of view,—I experience unbounded gratification in being allowed to submit to YOUR MAJESTY this humble exposition of my inquiries and observations respecting it.

YOUR MAJESTY'S exalted and revered name, thus identified with a subject certainly deserving of Your Royal consider-

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ation, sheds upon my short Narrative a dignity and consequence which I feel it too much wants, and, I fear, it too little deserves.

Under the deepest and most indelible impression of the distinguished honour conferred upon my humble endeavours,

I AM,

SIRE,

YOUR MAJESTY'S MOST FAITHFUL, OBLIGED,

AND DEVOTED SUBJECT,

GEORGE ALEXANDER THOMPSON.

UNIVERSIDAD FRANCISCO MARROQUIN
BIBLIOTECA LUDWIG VON MISES
GUATEMALA, C. A.

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Page 88. last line, for 'draft' read 'draught'.
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245. l. 7. for 'irreverend' read 'irreverent'.

INTRODUCTORY OBSERVATIONS.

ANOTHER Journal on South America, and that, too, at a moment when the very mention of those countries is apt to excite emotions of distrust, seems to make necessary some apology for its appearance. An ancient sage observed, that no one should write a history without prefacing it with an account of himself: the general indifference which at present prevails on the subject on which I am about to treat, and the moderate claims which I enjoy to the attention of the public, must excuse me for venturing to say something respecting the humble pretensions which the following pages may have to their notice.

It may not be unknown to some of my readers that I translated Alçedo's Diction-

ary of America and the West Indies; that my work was published in 1814, in five volumes quarto, and that it embraced, in addition to the translation, all the authentic information then extant, or which, through the most respectable patronage, could be obtained up to that period: I may be permitted to add, that I went out as Secretary to His Britannic Majesty's Mexican Commission, of which Mr. Lionel Hervey was chief, in 1823; and had the advantage of witnessing and being confidentially acquainted with the difficult and delicate circumstances in which the Commission was occasionally involved; and which the nice tact and energetic decision of its chief so mainly contributed to counteract or turn in favour not only of that republic, but of the country for whose interests he was the more immediately concerned. I had also the satisfaction of being there under Mr. Morier, when that gentleman, of whose talent in diplomacy it would be as unbecoming in me as it would be useless to speak, compiled

and wrote his report on the state of Mexico,—an undertaking, for which, I may be allowed to say, by the condescending urbanity of his disposition, and the unlimited respect which was consequently entertained for him by all parties, he was enabled to collect from every quarter the most authentic materials; and that I was, finally, with the Commission until the despatch of the Treaty which he and Mr. Ward, as Plenipotentiaries of His Britannic Majesty, had been directed to negotiate. In referring, as I do with humble though sincere satisfaction, to these points, I trust I shall not wound the delicacy of the feelings of the parties to whom I allude: the mention of them will, I hope not, as regards myself, be thought irrelevant to the public. *They* will, perhaps, in consequence, excuse me for offering the following pages to their perusal.

Having been ordered to leave Mexico, after the signing of the Treaty, for the purpose of proceeding to Guatemala, to report

to the British Government on the state of that Republic, I spared no pains in endeavouring to obtain the most authentic information respecting CENTRAL AMERICA; especially, as no correct or adequate account of it had hitherto been received in Europe.

Although I was eighteen months in Mexico, I have forborne mentioning any particulars respecting that country, in consequence of its having been already so amply treated of by others: I cannot, however, refrain from stating my belief that the notions which are entertained by the public respecting that as well as most of the other portions of the late Spanish Colonies are still very confused, and, I apprehend, more unsatisfactory than a strict and impartial consideration of their respective circumstances might appear to justify. In publishing the following NARRATIVE, I am doing that which I had never the remotest idea of doing till the present moment. It is true, I had taken short notes of the more particular incidents which had

occurred to me, chiefly for my own gratification: I have been induced to publish them because they will throw some light and information on a portion of those countries which has been of all of them the least known or visited by Europeans. I have endeavoured to put down my observations with the genuine sensation, I should rather say simplicity of feeling, with which I first noted them in my journal; being aware that the candid recital of incidents, trifling as they may abstractedly appear, often affords the best insight into the manners and feelings of a country. Those who have their notions of society trammelled by inveterate habits and civilized prescriptions, may deem such incidents whimsical and frivolous, whilst others of more expanded minds may cull from them, as the greatest botanists do even from weeds, both instruction and amusement.

The HISTORICAL and STATISTICAL account of Guatemala which is included in a supplementary form, contains, I have no

difficulty in asserting, much original, and I trust useful, information. Of all the Colonies of Old Spain, no one, I repeat, is so little known as that of Central America. Placed in the isthmus which divides the two continents, its situation is most favourable to commerce. It was formerly a captain-generalship, not subject to, as it has been erroneously believed, but always independent of the Viceroyalty of Mexico; and, having established its independence as a free state, which has been acknowledged by that Republic, it has hitherto maintained its integrity out of its own resources—the capital amount of the pecuniary assistance which it has derived from foreign countries not being more than one year's income of the Government.

The Map which faces the Title-page is intended to exhibit the Five States of the Federation, with their respective Districts, conformably to the recent divisions established by the Congress.

NARRATIVE

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FROM MEXICO.

CHAPTER I.

Leave the capital for the coast of Acapulco.—Arrive at the hacienda of Cermina.—Disasters on the journey.

21st April, 1825. The Mexican treaty having been negotiated by the plenipotentiaries, Mr. Morier and Mr. Wärd, I set off for the new republic of Guatemala, for the purpose of reporting on the state of affairs in that country. The Mexican government, which had hitherto shewn so much jealousy towards Guatemala, had now come to an amicable understanding with her, which had been brought about chiefly

through the skill and attention of my esteemed friend Don Juan de Dios Mayorga, minister from the Central Republic at Mexico. Accordingly, I was informed by Mr. Alaman *, on asking for my passport, that an embassy was about to depart in a few weeks from his government. He suggested to me whether it would not be better for me to wait a little longer, to enable me to accompany it. Having heard that the Tartar frigate, Captain Brown, was at Acapulco, I resolved not to follow Mr. Alaman's advice. Captain Brown having been applied to with a request that he would take me to some port in Guatemala, he returned for answer that he was going up to San Blas, and should, in about the middle of April, put into Acapulco, from whence he would convey me, in case I should happen to be there, but that the nature of his instructions would not allow him to detain the vessel in that harbour. After some consultation, it was agreed that another letter

* The Mexican Minister for Foreign Affairs.

should be sent by express, pointing out to Captain Brown the urgency of the case, and thus, without waiting for his reply, I prepared to make all the arrangements for my immediate departure; and on Thursday the 21st of April, at five o'clock in the evening, left San Cosme.

My equipage consisted of ten baggage mules, besides two for my servants; one sumpter mule for myself, and three horses, with an escort of ten soldiers. I had made inquiries, some days previous, for any persons who might be likely to be going the same journey, and discovered, to my satisfaction, that a merchant, Don Mateo O——, who was trading alternately between Mexico, Guatemala, and Colombia, was about setting off to Acapulco. He joined me just as I was starting, and putting into my hands two papers of gold, each containing eighty doubloon pieces, requested me to lock them in my desk, as he expressed it, for greater security. There was no room for them there, and he therefore put them,

with my permission, into a carpet bag, which was the only part of the luggage which was not already packed; and this, together with the money I took for my own occasions, was tied up by one of the muleteers in an *estera*, or mat of the country. I had just mounted my horse and was starting, when Mr. Mayorga, the Guatemalian minister, arrived to take leave of me. He also informed me that it was his intention to accompany me part of the journey, and that he had sent on his baggage for that purpose. I, of course, entered the carriage which he had provided; a large clumsy machine, drawn by eight mules. I found in it also my particular friend, Don Domingo Saviñon, secretary of the Colombian legation at Mexico.

When we had passed the *garita*, or gate of the city, it was observed that Mr. Mayorga's baggage had not passed through it, and we turned back to see if it had gone out by another gate, which also led to San Agustin, the place where we pro-

posed to sleep that night. After sitting some time in the carriage at this gate, Mr. Mayorga mounted one of my horses, and set off to ascertain whether his retinue might not have passed by another route. A full hour having elapsed without our seeing any thing of him, and it being nearly dark, my companion, Don Domingo Saviñon, and myself, began to be apprehensive that something untoward had occurred. We were too right in our conjectures, for when it was about half-past seven o'clock, we discovered that Mr. Mayorga had been attacked in his way through the suburbs by two armed robbers, one on horseback, the other on foot, who took from him my horse with all its accoutrements, and stripped him not only of his money, but of the greatest part of the cloaths he had on. It was now agreed, as it was absolutely necessary, that he should return to equip himself. He took the whole affair most good-humouredly, for he is a remarkably gentle kind hearted man; but we could not help

laughing immoderately, there was something so ridiculous in the whole affair. It was now night, and Mr. Saviñon having had the kindness to purchase for me a new saddle and horse furniture to replace what I had thus lost, we left the garita about ten o'clock, with another escort of ten men, which I had provided for this dangerous journey,—the original escort having proceeded with the baggage.

We arrived at San Agustin about one o'clock in the morning: it was quite dark. We were set down at the gate of an old inn which was now occupied as a barrack, and the court yard was thickly strewed with soldiers sleeping in their cloaths and accoutrements, in the open air. We retreated to a smaller house, where, although there was less accommodation, there were fewer visitors to partake of it. I went up a ladder into a room where I found both my servants fast asleep. I had eaten nothing since two o'clock on that day, and was much fatigued and exhausted by the anxieties I had gone

through, but I had some still greater and more vexatious yet to encounter. I partook of a leg of cold fowl, which Mr. Mayorga's servant had brought with him ready cooked, and some cold brandy and water, the only liquor which we could get at, whilst our beds were being arranged in the little apartment which this house afforded.

The bag which contained the doubloons was placed under the head of Ignacio, my valet, a smart active young man, and as honest, I believe, as most of the Mexican servants. It had a snap-spring lock, which closed of itself by pressure, but opened with a key. When I had unlocked it, he took out of it my sleeping-gown and night-cap, and one of the papers of doubloons fell, unexpectedly, upon the floor; but with all our search, the other paper, amounting to nearly £300 sterling, was not forthcoming, neither could I ever ascertain what had become of it. I was sorely vexed at the circumstance; but as I had made many objections, in the first instance, to take the money

amongst my luggage, and only consented to do so under a strict injunction to my unfortunate fellow traveller not to let the bag which contained it out of his own sight, I did not feel myself bound in any way to make good to him the loss. This, I must say, he bore with great fortitude and resignation. He was a jocose and pleasant, and also a well informed, companion, but, at times, the recollection of his misfortune did not fail to press heavily upon us in our journey, which had thus so disastrously commenced.

The next morning, the 22d, was clear and fine. We set off at eight o'clock, and began immediately to ascend out of the Mexican plain. The road for about five leagues was very rough, all along the side of the mountain of Ajusco, which forms so beautiful an object from San Cosme. We passed over the remains of a fine stone road, leading to the *hacienda* of the late Don Miguel de Borda, who was one of the grandees of Mexico in the commencement of its

greatest pitch of prosperity; he was extremely rich, but died about fifty years ago, and I could not recollect having heard, in the capital, any vestiges of his family. The road, which is decaying fast under the repeated effects of the mountain torrents, will keep his memory alive as long as any portion of it exists: had it not been for its relics, neither I nor any of my readers would have heard any thing of the once opulent and magnificent Borda.

We arrived at Cuernavaca about six o'clock in the evening, after passing, for the last three leagues, through one of the most beautiful countries that can be imagined. At this distance from the town there was encamped a requia, or drove of mules, to the number of 140 or more, conveying China goods to Mexico from the South Sea. The beauty and splendour of these articles, consisting chiefly of crapes, and the richest silk velvets of the most extraordinary and beautiful patterns, together with gold and silver embroidered muslins and

worked silk counterpanes, can hardly be conceived. I have never seen such things from the China market introduced into Europe; they fetch a good price in Mexico, but it is necessary to bargain with the merchants who deal in them, for I have known them to take one third of what they originally might ask. The town of Cuernavaca would be an agreeable place to reside in; its population is about 10,000 souls; it is well wooded and watered; the houses are clean, and have a comfortable appearance; it is something like the village of Carshalton, near London. The houses are tiled after the English fashion. Here the commandant called upon me, at my inn, to offer his services. I invited him to supper, which he partook of with Don Juan Mayorga and myself,—my companion Don Mateo, and the landlady's little daughter, about eight years old, making up the party.

Previously to my leaving Mexico, I had got fitted up in a hurry, a small canteen,

furnished principally with tin and brass articles which I had obtained from the warehouses of the European merchants. I asked the child what metal the tin was: she answered, as I expected, *Plata;* I then asked her, shewing her a brass saucepan, what she thought that was: she answered, *Oro.* Although my little friend had this matter-of-course notion of the elegance and splendour of life, there was nothing in her mother's dwelling to correspond with the magnificence of her ideas. A long, dirty, wooden table, so high that, when seated, you were enabled to eat off your plate without raising your hand or stooping, and a bench to correspond, formed the whole of the furniture of the apartment.

Two or three dishes well dressed in the Spanish fashion, some excellent fruit, and a bottle of English port-wine, made the evening pass off very pleasantly; when the table and form were each of them cleared to perform the office of bedsteads.

After breakfast I took leave of Don

Juan de Dios de Mayorga, who returned to Mexico by way of Toluca. He parted in the highest spirits at the prospect of the benefits which would arise to his country from the report I might make on its political condition; and he gave me several letters of recommendation to his private friends, as well as to his government,—to the interests of which there never was a minister more ardently and devoutly attached than appeared to be this excellent man.

Beautiful as the route was yesterday, it was to-day, the 23d, greatly surpassed in every thing that could make it charming: the country was undulating and picturesque. About midday, we passed along the verge of a prodigious ravine, through the bottom of which flowed an abundant stream of water brilliantly pure; and two leagues farther on we came to a large sugar plantation belonging to the family of the Yermos. The crops were in different degrees of ripeness, and some had been just gathered and cleared with great nicety and

diligence. The irrigation, effected by sluices from the stream just mentioned, and which also turned a powerful mill, was conveniently and effectually managed. We were on the borders of the Tierra Caliente: the agave was not here to be found with its refreshing beverage, the pulque, but, instead, the sugar-cane was luxuriating in the moist soil and hot atmosphere.

The first notice I perceived of the change of climate, was the effect it had upon our poor animals. The mule I rode was a little thick in the wind, and I believe very old; but she was nevertheless a fine animal, and I was surprised to find her, towards three o'clock in the afternoon, after having travelled about twenty miles, come to a stand-still. She was what they here call *soleadod*, or sun stricken. About two leagues farther on, we halted. One of the soldiers proposed to bleed her for me, and picking up a bit of stick, he cut it with his sword into a sharp point, and thrust it up

the poor animal's nose. A moderate flow of blood from the nostrils, perhaps half a pint, was the consequence. After this, he took a quarter of a pint of brandy and poured it into the animal's ears, which seemed to distress or to please it, I could hardly tell which, exceedingly. He then let go her head, which she stooped and shook violently, and then remarking to me, "está buena," she is all right, he was about to replace the bridle and saddle, which, however, I would not permit, but left her to come on with the baggage which was behind us a small distance on the road: this animal never suffered any inconvenience during the rest of the journey. The phleme used upon the occasion was, it appears, as efficient as it was calculated for the contingencies which travellers are likely to experience in a country so thinly peopled. The application of the brandy in the ear I was the less surprised at, as it is used in Mexico as a constant, and, I believe, specific remedy for the most violent

pains in the head, especially those arising from tooth-ach. In this case it is inserted by a syringe, or more frequently by the mouth of the operator, into the ear opposite to that side of the face where the pain lies, and is suffered to remain in till the pain leaves the patient, which I have always perceive it do, however violent the attack may have been, in the course of three or four minutes: the whole effect is doubtlessly produced by what is called counteraction.

Early in the evening I arrived at a sugar water-mill, one of the largest haciendas in Mexico. It was built about half a century ago, by Don Carlos Cermina. Here they made weekly 2,000 arrobas, of 25 lbs. each, of molasses, selling for fifteen dollars per carga of eighteen arrobas, also 2,000 arrobas of sugar, besides fifty barrels of brandy. There might have been employed about 1,000 hands; but the works were not in full operation. They belonged to the same owners as the sugar estate and mill of

S. Gabriel, which I passed in the middle of that day. The bailiff or steward seemed to keep an open house for the benefit of travellers: a temporary meal was immediately provided; and, afterwards, a handsome supper in one of the upper apartments, at which the family attended. There was a great choice of rooms, and my bed was made up at a distance from the more inhabited part, at the end of a long suite; my servants were accommodated in a room at a little distance, but after the doubts and perplexities I was suffering under respecting the unaccountable abstraction of the doubloons, I hardly knew whether to consider myself the safer for their company. The under-servant had been one of the grooms at San Cosme, a fine athletic fellow, but exceedingly demure and almost stupid in his demeanour; he had so often and so anxiously requested of the Major Domo permission to accompany me, that I at last assented. I thought, this evening, on my retiring to rest, that he evinced something

impudent in his manner. He came up to me without the slightest symptom of the respect commonly shewn by servants, especially in that country, and which with him had usually been manifested even to a degree of disgusting obsequiousness: I rated him soundly for his conduct, and, after looking at the priming of my pistols, proceeded to place them, whilst he observed me, under my pillow. As we had a long journey to travel the next day, we rose very early; but, as I expected, the escort was not ready to accompany us. My bed was close to a window that looked out in the farm-yard of the hacienda: partly from distrust at my situation with my servants, and partly from a constant noise of shouts and exclamations of the soldiery kept up till past midnight, I slept indifferently. It was a beautiful moonlight night, and I had the curiosity to step to the window to see what was going on: I was not a little surprised to find that the escort who had complained in the day of the length of the march, were repaying

themselves for their over-fatigue, by carousing and playing at monte, a game of odd or even, during the whole night: much money seemed to be sported; there was also some drinking going on; and the shadows which were thrown upon their countenances and postures, as they sat ardently engaged in their intoxicating pursuits, blended with the soft rays of moonlight, would have afforded a group worthy of the pencil of a Salvator Rosa.

CHAPTER II.

Simple inhabitants of Amates.—Lodging at Tepecoaquilco.—Troops proceeding to the coast.—Spotted Indians of Istola.

It was quite dark when we left the court-yard in the morning of Sunday the 24th. The road now became more mountainous. We afterwards passed through a fine park-like country, and I broke my fast about 7 o'clock, by plucking, as I rode along, some wild cherries from a tree which had exactly the appearance of an oak, but without a single leaf. We soon came up to a small hamlet, consisting of about half a dozen cottages; but the only inhabitant we saw was a pretty young girl about sixteen, who was returning from mass: we gained admittance at one of the houses by knocking lustily at the door; it was the public-house of the place. The sole liquor, however, which it afforded was some coarse brandy, of which

I drank a little mixed with water, for I was faint and fatigued, but my companion, Don Mateo, assured me that that was a very unwholesome beverage: it ought always, he said, to be drunk neat, a practice which, although a very sober man, he always adopted. The same prejudice prevails universally through these countries, even amongst the ladies; but, with all their recommendation, it was a practice I never could, even out of compliment to them, follow, since the liquor in question is a complete alcohol. About midday we reached the village of los Amates; and the heat being considerable, we stopped to take some nourishment. Whilst planning something for this purpose, the husband of our hostess, a good looking Indian woman of about eighteen, with three or four pretty children, had returned home with a kid which he had just shot. I immediately purchased the animal for a dollar, which was three times as much as he would probably have parted with it for, and dined off of one of the haunches,

which was indifferently roasted. After our meal, our saddle-rugs being spread on the floor, we took our siesta: but my attention was chiefly occupied by the proceedings of this more than patriarchal establishment: now and then a child came running in to get a drink of water, to which it would help itself by a small wooden bowl composed of the rind of a gourd finely painted with red, with silver and gilt ornaments, dipping it into a coarse earthen jar, and replacing the gourd on the top so as to exclude the dust and air. The poultry were busily employed in picking up the crumbs of the repast, and a sturdy old sow was disputing a bone with one of our sportsman's mongrels, who boldly, though not so effectually, asserted his privileges and title to the offals of the chase. I gave the two eldest children, who had now been desperately employed in ridding me from the annoyance of these animals, a dollar a-piece. I soon found that my bounty was lavish and inconsiderate: in a few minutes, children were seen pouring out from

all the huts in the village, accompanied by their parents, their grandfathers and grandmothers: some of them were extremely old and feeble, and I was forced to listen to a long series of all the ills "which human flesh is heir to."

The poor Indians of this country think that every Englishman is, ex-officio, a physician. I began to conceive myself one of those who has attached to his pretensions "advice to the poor gratis, on Sundays:" but I could not practise even without greater liberality than this, for my patients not only did not pay any fees, but expected to receive them for the trouble they had subjected themselves to in taking my advice. A dollar or two changed into half rials, which reversed the proverb, by throwing bad money after good, saved my credit and my patience. The latter was nearly exhausted, but the former continued to increase so rapidly that as I mounted my horse and walked him off slowly on my way, I beheld faces looking anxious at my departure, and heard

half suppressed sighs of gratitude and disappointment, which assured me how welcome my longer stay would have been amongst them. The Indian who sold me the venison was particularly desirous of a little gunpowder: not having more with me than my exigencies might require, and the escort having left me this morning, I could only afford to give him a few charges: he seemed to calculate each charge at the price of a deer: I concluded, therefore, that he was a probably sure shot.

I arrived this evening at the respectable town of Tepecoaquilco, and delivered a letter of introduction to the Alcalde, by name Don Manuel Arazave: he keeps the largest shop, and has one of the best houses in the town, retailing all kinds of dry goods. My companion, Don Mateo, informed me that he had procured a lodging, and I therefore refused to accept the offer made me by Don Manuel of sleeping under his roof. I was very much tired and exhausted as I sat in the market-place, watching the people pa-

rading about in their holiday cloaths on this beautiful but sultry evening. They came to ask me what I would have for supper: I said, half pettishly, "oh there is nothing that I can find here that I should like, unless it were a pailful of ice." "Alli está Señor," There it is, Sir, was the reply, and a man was pointed out to me who was selling it at the corner of the market-place. Struck with the singularity of a circumstance so unexpected, I rose to convince myself of the fact: it was pretty correct: the man's pail was more than half full, but, from the incessant demands upon it, it seemed likely to be immediately exhausted: there was no time to be lost: the bargain seemed about to be dissolved before it was struck. I made him an offer for the remainder: it was purchased for seven rials and a half, and carried off to my lodgings, to the amusement of those who had made good their purchases, and the disappointment of other thirsty expectants, who, however, had the discretion or good humour to join in the laugh.

My lodging was of a very sorry nature: a gate, similar to those which we have in our English farm-yards admitted us into a paddock on the side of a lane, a little out of the town: the house consisted of a dead wall against the road side, with the front and one of the sides completely open, without any wall, except one of about three feet high. It was, in fact, a shed, and admirably adapted for a cow-house, being shaded from the south, and having a rich pasture in front. We ate heartily of the ice, and had nothing to repent of, but that we had not eaten it all; for the little we had kept for a bonne bouche in the morning, notwithstanding all the precautions that could be taken, we discovered had resolved itself into its liquid state.

Monday, 25th. Set off at about seven o'clock. We passed some infantry, about 100 men, who were proceeding to the garrisons on the coast. When within twelve miles of Istola, they came up with us whilst we were preparing our breakfast. The

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mules had been unloaded, and the baggage was lying in disorder before the small inn at which we had taken up our quarters. Don Mateo, who knew the necessity of precaution from the serious loss he had so unaccountably sustained, was ordering our peons to dispose the things in a safer and more compact form, when the officer commanding the troops, coming up and overhearing his remarks, which he considered directed against his men, immediately repelled the attack with the bitterest epithets, accompanied with the most threatening gestures. The noise of words continued; the officer had drawn his sword, when Don Mateo stepped up to him, and muttering two or three short sentences in his ear, in which I could distinguish the words "Su Majestad Britanica," the former became suddenly pacified, and, approaching me respectfully, said, he was far from intending any affront to myself or my companion; only he would never allow the character of his soldiers to be called in question, who,

he added, were as honest fellows as any to be found in Mexico. I told him I was quite of that opinion myself, and Don Mateo coming up, and asserting his belief of the fact, we were all agreed, and became such good friends that I told Don Mateo to ask him to join us at breakfast, which the officer declined.

I was surprised to see my companion, shortly after, very busy amongst the muleteers, who were again harnessing the poor animals before they had scarcely time to refresh themselves. My horse was ready, and Don Mateo nodding to me to mount, I proceeded into the open road, on which the sun was now shining with all the dazzling and oppressive splendour of its midday career. About four miles on, there stood, in the centre of our path, a magnificent specimen of vegetation, of which I could not learn the name, but very similar to the English oak, and as large as almost any specimen of it to be met with. "We must take our siesta here," said Don Mateo,

and, contrary to my inclination, our saddle-cloths being disposed on the ground, we laid ourselves down to rest under this natural canopy. Don Mateo's siesta, which he could take in general, with a precision, as to length and duration, that might regulate the sun, but by which it was, in fact, influenced, seemed to have slept faster than usual. We remounted in pursuit of our baggage, which he said he had ordered on, as we might overtake it. I remarked that he was constantly looking behind him, although he was pressing his horse forward: he was desirous to get to his baggage, and from the soldiers, being under the twofold influence of attraction and repulsion, like a needle placed between the opposite poles of two magnets.

Istola is a real inland Indian town: the alcalde and all the authorities are purely of this origin: their faces and bodies are covered with large black spots, which are catching either by contact or by the use of their furniture or implements. Having

high cheek bones and small black eyes, they remind you of the tattooed natives of the South Sea islands. The chief authority came out to welcome me; he was dressed in blue cotton trowsers, much the worse for wear, and a coloured cotton jacket, and bore in his hand his baton of office. A bird-cage kind of house, fifteen feet by six, divided into two apartments by wicker work, was provided for my accommodation; but, having learnt the danger of infection, I walked into an inclosure where they were unloading the mules, and flung myself down on my baggage to rest whilst my supper was being cooked. We had provided ourselves with meat, fowls, and other substantial necessaries at the last town, Tepecoaquilco, as judging we should not be likely to meet with them here; but before they could be cooked, they were stolen by some of the poor wretches who were hovering about the place; a fact which was announced to me with the usual shrug of the shoulder,

and with the simple ejaculation of "No parecen," They don't appear. It seemed that I was to go to bed supperless; so I composed myself to sleep, after having eaten a bit of bread, and drunk some port-wine, which with a tumbler of water I usually found it necessary to have placed beside my couch, as it was usual for me to be affected, according to the situation, either by shivering or slight fever, generally succeeded by violent drought,—and I diluted the wine according to circumstances. Something like a supper had been prepared, and being brought to me whilst half awake, I told them to put it down by me. About three o'clock in the morning, I awoke exceedingly hungry, and unfortunately discovered that my supper had suffered a "no parece;" the pigs, with which the yard was full, had eaten it for me. I was again awoke by something sniffing at me, and a loud snort in my ear: it was one of the mules which, as I rose, turned sharply round, and nearly planted

both her hind feet on my face, as she galloped off, leaving us each equally astonished at our mutual discovery.

The Indians of this village, who are called *Pintos*, are not peculiar to it alone: they are found in many other parts of Mexico, and I had frequently seen them in the capital.

The population of Istola might amount to about 1000 souls. There is only one place of worship, hardly large enough to accommodate the congregation, but there are the remains of a church, which was, once, a handsome and convenient structure. It was not likely to be repaired, as the mission was very poor, and they could hardly find a priest who could come to say mass, even once a fortnight.

Tuesday, 26th. Set off before daylight. We passed through a large wood, and missed our road, having mistaken for it a track round the side of some deep ravines, leading to a watering place for cattle. This detour mortified us, as we lost the advan-

tage of our early start, for we had gone a league out of the road: we however reached Zopilote at midday.

Zopilote is the name of a vulture: we saw about 2000 of these dull birds sitting on the trees, as a sort of advanced guard of the place which so properly bears their designation, since they were the only living things that were to be seen in it: like other watchmen, they were, for the most part, fast asleep. The doors of the two small houses of which the place consisted were closed, denoting that the inhabitants were also enjoying their siesta: we went on to take ours at Zumpango, a tolerably good looking Indian town, where we met with a kind reception and a clean floor, in a house very similar to an English barn; it being situated in a farm-yard, well supplied with stock of all kinds: the water too was particularly fresh and excellent. Two leagues before we reached this place I met the extraordinario, or courier, who had been dispatched to Acapulco, previously to my

leaving Mexico, to inform Captain Brown of my intended departure for the coast. I was told that, up to seven o'clock on Sunday night, there was no appearance of the Tartar from San Blas; and being now so near my journey's end, I felt secure and happy as to the certainty of my being able to avail myself of that frigate for my conveyance to Guatemala.

CHAPTER III.

Pretty Town of Chilpantzingo.—Inn at Acaquisotla.—Widow and daughters at Dos Caminos.—Goître family at Tierra Colorada.—Muleteer family at Alto Cameron.—Well informed host at Dos Arroyos.—Arrive at Acapulco.

Mr. Barcaistegie, who was acting as British Consul at the port of Acapulco, sent me a letter by the courier, requesting that I would forward to him a notice from Dos Arroyos, sixteen leagues from the port, in order that he might come to meet and conduct me to a house which he had prepared for my accommodation. I proceeded on in great spirits to Chilpantzingo, and took up my abode in a clean cottage-like residence. We were waited upon by a decent motherly woman, assisted by her son, a respectable lad of eighteen years of age. Chilpantzingo is a pretty town, with about 1200 inhabitants, and a good parish church, besides chapels. It is by no means

a disagreeable or unhealthy place to live in, and there are many spots, in the centre of the town, which is intersected by a deep ravine, at the bottom of which flows a small river, where some villas might be erected, to great advantage.

Having set off about seven o'clock on the 27th, we arrived at a village called Acaquisotla, about three in the afternoon, and put up at a venta which seemed more like a regular inn than any we had met with on our journey from the capital. Three or four persons were halting here, who had come up from the coast, and were proceeding on to Mexico. On the other side of the road, opposite to the venta, was a small sugar-mill, worked by two mules: I understood it was constantly employed, and had been at work from time immemorial. The dinner was served on some fine old pieces of china of different patterns and sizes: they probably formed part of the first importations from Pekin, and were destined for some of the grandees of

Mexico, but owing to some, now inexplicable, cause, were lodged for a night at this inn, two or three centuries ago, and have never yet got farther on the route of their original destination. The shed in front of the house being previously occupied by the other travellers, my baggage was disposed in two parallel lines in the road, and, in the middle of this, at one end, was placed my bed: two of the muleteers being stretched on the ground, at the other end, and my servants disposed of as they thought proper; for I had so much doubt of their honesty as to induce me to believe myself as safe without, as with, their protection. In this exposed state, I took the precaution, in addition to my pistols, to put my sword in the bed with me, and, to save trouble against an opportunity when trouble might be most conveniently spared, I laid it by me ready drawn.

Thursday, 28th, by ten o'clock, we had travelled six leagues, and had a good Spanish breakfast at Dos Caminos, at the house

of a widow, with two handsome daughters, about eighteen and nineteen years of age. They furnished us with chocolate, broiled fowl, stewed frixoles, or beans, and some dainty slices from a pig which they had just killed. Don Mateo, who was in the habit of travelling this country, seemed to be admitted to all the little indulgences and familiarities with these young damsels which a traveller to Birmingham from St. Mary Axe has indisputable claim to from all the spruce bar-maids on the road. He chucked one under the chin, began waltzing with the other, cracked his jokes with both, and, as he sat upon the table, kicking his legs and smoking his *puro* (cigar), he seemed, at every whiff, to forget the golden ounces of which he had been plundered, and to be no bad picture of that reasonable kind of being who is disposed to take the world as he finds it.

After travelling six leagues through a picturesque country, and the greater part of the road being over a fine turf, we ar-

rived at an Indian village called Tierra Colorada. The house we put up at was a dismal contrast to the one we had left in the morning. The mother was dirty and decrepit; two or three miserable ill-formed children, all of them affected with the gôitre, or swelled neck, and one child which was dumb and idiotish, were the inmates of this afflicted abode. I do not know how it was, but the latter of these objects, a little girl of five years old, was the only one I could endure to look at, or of whose services I could bear to accept. The child discovered my preference, and called forth all its vigour to do justice to my partiality. I made signs for what I wanted, and rewarded it with small pieces of money as my commissions were severally executed. Sometimes it would stand puzzling and perplexing itself for a moment, and then run off to do my bidding, with an alacrity and energy exceeding its tender years.

By eleven o'clock the next morning we had reached a spot called Alto Cameron, with a solitary house on the side of a steep

conical hill. It was composed of one good sized apartment built of reeds, and two others detached, one serving as the kitchen, the other as the bed-room: the family, which was very large, consisted of two sons, and five daughters. One of them had been lately married, and the four others, all marriageable, were likely to follow the example, for they were very comely, and had each got a lover. There were two swinging cots in the front apartment, one formed of open mat-work, the other of string-net. A recumbent posture being the most desirable, and this couch admitting on all sides the free circulation of the air, there is hardly a hut, however mean, that has not this accommodation: it is generally occupied by the elder branches of the family; but as there are no seats of any kind, it is always tenanted by some portion of the inmates. The usual method of availing yourself of this indulgence, on arriving at any of these simple hospitable abodes, is to untie your leggings or stamped leather boots of the country,

generally to take off your jacket, either woollen or cotton, and having lighted a cigar, to put yourself in full swing, smoking and swinging till you fall asleep. I had gone through all but the latter part of this ceremony on the present occasion. Whilst the girls were preparing the repast, Don Mateo was keeping up his traveller's privilege; he seemed to be free of the kitchen, and shewed his good nature by helping them in their culinary offices, which they appeared to acknowledge with hilarity; indeed, my ears were, every now and then, assailed with such bursts of laughter and good humour, as to make it impossible for me to sleep.

Don Mateo was a handsome well-made man, about forty-two years of age, and five feet eight in height, with remarkably piercing black eyes and dark olive complexion: his nose was aquiline, and his beard and hair, which were black and curling, were slightly tinged with white: he had entered his autumnal quarter, but had all the raciness of spring in his habits and dispo-

sition: this accounts for his making himself so agreeable with the softer sex; who generally prefer a man of maturer years, with a pleasing cheerful address, to an insipid young one. The breakfast proved quite as good as that we had the day before, at Dos Caminos.

Before we had departed, the father of this happy family came home, with one of his sons. He was a master muleteer by profession, and was considered passing rich. Many of the Mexican creoles owe their fortunes and respectability to the same origin; and, indeed, there is hardly any safer or more certainly lucrative calling that can be followed in the country, particularly when, as in this instance, the proprietor is also the chief conductor of the business.

The family of General Guerrero, to whose military personal prowess the independence of Mexico is, perhaps, more owing than to that of any other individual in the republic, owed their fortunes to the

large *requas*, or droves of mules which they employed in this carrying trade.

At Dos Arroyos, we put up at a peon's, or day-labourer's house. He had just returned home in the evening to partake the domestic comforts prepared for him by a tidy young wife and three little children. As he was my humble host, I invited him to be my friendly guest. His ideas of political economy and regal governments were strikingly limited. With regard to the former, all that he knew was that, under the old régime, he used to pay eight dollars for the shirt which now cost him but two, and that the *mita*, or capitation tax, he no longer paid at all: but, when I told him that there were other kings greater than the king of Spain, he shook his head with a doubtful air: to be sure, he had lately heard something of the English, that they were very clever people, and could find out gold and silver in the mines which the Spaniards had given up as exhausted; but then

said he, "what a pity it is they are all Jews."

I left the domicile of my well-informed host as soon as four o'clock the next morning, the 30th, being desirous, by entering early in the day into Acapulco, to prevent the complimentary reception which I had understood Mr. Barcaistegie, the acting consul, was preparing for me. The journey now was a rapid descent towards the sea coast: the banana trees were flourishing on all sides with a vigour peculiar to this climate: the Indian corn or maize was growing to a gigantic height, and the face of the country presented as different an aspect to what I had for the three or four former days been accustomed to behold, as the abrupt shifting of a dramatic scene could present. At twelve o'clock we stopped at Venta Vieja, a tolerable village and one of great importance in former times, when the Spanish galleons arrived at Acapulco, being, as it is, the first resting place for the cargoes destined for the capital.

Don Mateo having business to transact with a merchant here, I left this place in company with a friend of the latter, who offered to conduct me to the port. I do not recollect that I was gratified with a glance at the ocean during these eight miles. I was anxious to see the waste of waters, although on the wrong side of the continent, which might bear me home to England; and the first notice I had that I was approaching it was the distant roar of the beach of Acapulco. I spurred my horse on down a steep and dangerous stone road, which my companion's mule, whether by his master's excitement or my example, was preparing to encounter in the same manner, when unfortunately it fell, and precipitated the rider. I hastened back, and was glad to find that he was not materially hurt, and out of complaisance to him, but sorely against my own wishes, I continued to slacken my pace till we arrived at our destination.

CHAPTER IV.

Opinion respecting Acapulco.—Nature of its garrison. — His Majesty's ship Tartar in sight.— Ball in the street.

I DID not find Acapulco by any means so miserable a place as it is so generally described to be: the freshness of the sea-breeze and the beautiful expanse of waters in the bay as fine as any in the world, formed an agreeable contrast to the inland monotonous life which a person leads in the valley of Mexico: the mountains, which surround this valley, give you the idea of prison walls, beyond which you can only escape with difficulty and patience: you seem to be living in a crow's nest, beyond the reach of and intercourse with the rest of the world. How different is the situation of one, who, far from his home and relatives, lives on the sea-shore! he places his foot on the water, and he touches the grand material link of the uni-

verse, which seems, also morally, to unite him with the social intercourse of the whole terraqueous globe. These sensations, heightened by the obliging attention shewn me by Mr. Barcaistegie, who had provided for me accommodation in his own house, made me feel indescribably cheerful and happy. I am not partial to fish, but now I felt I could not endure the thought of eating any thing else for my dinner. There is but one kind of fish which is found in the lakes, at Mexico, very watery and insipid, about the size and of the flavour of a small indifferently good whiting. With regard to the proportion of the Mexican to common lakes, it may be properly called the Mexican minnow: I had long become disgusted with them, though they maintained a pretty good character with most of my countrymen no less than the Mexicans themselves: my friend's table was provided with several sorts of the finest fish the town afforded; they were excellent, and all different from any I had before tasted.

Whoever has read Anson's voyage will remember the delight which his poor sailors experienced when they could, at length, put their foot a-shore: they are described as reviving at every step they took upon terra firma. The delight they experienced in leaving the sea for the dry land could not have been greater than that which I felt in leaving the land to plunge into the sea. I never enjoyed a bath so much in my life, but I was, accidentally, inconvenienced in the operation, in a manner which I could not have foreseen. I had hung my shirt on a Nopal shrub on the beech, which was in a flowering state, and emitted from its buds myriads of little prickles, the whole of which were transferred to my body. My agony, added to the intense heat of the climate, was excruciating; it was in vain to attempt to pick them out, for even if I had had the patience to do so, the thing was impracticable, for they had adhesion enough to keep their hold, whilst the slightest attempt to withdraw them

broke them short off on the surface of the skin. This incident, trifling as it may appear, caused the night, which was excessively hot, and the following day, to pass most miserably.

Whilst walking on the shore, in the evening, I fell into conversation with a respectable elderly man, an old Spaniard, who, in spite of the badness of trade, was still carrying on his mercantile affairs in this comparatively abandoned port. He was of commanding and rather robust stature, wore his hair combed back and powdered, with a pigtail; had on drab kerseymere breeches unbuttoned at the knees, black and white speckled silk stockings, an ample pair of shoes, and a small pair of diamond buckles: the above, with a shirt of the finest cambric, nicely plaited all over and unconfined at the collar, completed his costume. He invited me to his house, and, as I happened to know many of his intimate friends in Mexico, I was glad to go and have a chat with him. He

was very fond of cold water and cigars; his two hammocks were suspended in thorough draughts: he spat all about the stone floor, and used half a dozen clean silver forks to eat his dinner with. The gentleman of whom I speak is Don Juan M——a, and, I repeat, a thorough old Spaniard, for he knows how to regard new fangled institutions with a sneering indifference, and those of antiquated prescription with an indifferent sneer; and, whilst possessing cunning enough to appear temperate, and almost temperance enough to hide his cunning, he has a warm heart with a chill of prejudice, as though he were a compound of his *puro* and his *eau-sucré*. He had formerly been a physician, and he even now attends the hospital and the poor who may require his services gratuitously.

The Juez de Letras was applied to by Mr. Barcaistegie, with a view of seeing if any thing could be elicited from my servants respecting the robbery; but, as I suspected, nothing came out on their exa-

mination, although taken separately, which could lead to their crimination.

The Carmen, Indiaman, Captain Proudfoot, from China, was lying in the harbour, and we went on board her: she had suffered dreadfully in a gale, a fortnight before she made the port, had lost her mizen, and was so leaky that they had been able to save her only by passing a sail under her, which had fortunately effected the purpose required. She was laden with China goods, the duties of which would have been valuable to the Government, if they had been made available; but, from the system which was going on, I had much doubt whether they would prove so, to any thing like the extent which the republic had a right to expect.

In the evening, about 200 troops were reviewed in the Plaza. On one side of this square, is a shed where some of the authorities, and particularly the Commissary General, were sitting and going through their business with solemnity and import-

ance. I discovered that the Commissary was Don José Barazo, and felt a little ashamed that I had not known, or not attended to, his name before, for he was the very same person who had accompanied me into Acapulco. I was glad to find he experienced but little bad effects from his fall.

The troops at this station are composed of the most abandoned portion of the Mexican population. Most of those we met with on the road, when the officer was so strenuous in defence of their honour, were convicts, who were coming to replenish the ranks of the hopeful band who were on the parade. There was scarcely a man of them, I was told, who had not committed crimes worthy of death: one of them, a fair slight made man, about twenty-three, with light hair, was particularly pointed out to me as known to be one of the greatest desperados that ever had human form; he is said to have bragged that he had committed thirteen murders and assassinations, amongst which his father was one of the victims. These are dan-

gerous materials with which to ensure the safety of a town, by entrusting the garrison and all the strong places in their hands.

Tuesday, 3d May. At ten o'clock, whilst we were at breakfast, a message was brought informing us that the flag was hoisted on the fort, and that the Tartar was in sight. I immediately mounted my horse, accompanied by Mr. Barcaistegie, and rode up the side of the hill called the Quebrada, to witness the interesting object. Before twelve o'clock, Lieut. Morgan came on shore to see if I had arrived, and, a few hours after, Captain Brown himself also landed. I was glad to find I had not detained him, and, as he was in a hurry to depart, it was settled that I should go on board the next day.

The street in which my host, the acting consul, lived, was not large, but it was one of the best, and contained the most respectable houses in the town. Towards the evening, an assembly of the inhabitants had collected before the house, and a dance was struck up in the open air. The music consisted of

guitars played to good time, which was rendered more distinct and marked by the spectators, many of whom accompanied it by tattooing with their fingers on the benches or any thing else near them equally convenient for the purpose. Two or three of them who had unemployed guitars, and were not acquainted with the use of the strings, or perhaps with the tune which was playing, shewed a wonderful dexterity in the use of their fingers, by thrumming on the back of the instrument with such correctness as to give the stress and feeling of the air in the most perfect manner, without the intonation and cadence of the notes. There were relays of dancers as well as of musicians, so that the amusement was kept up, without intermission, for two or three hours. The dance was, throughout, a repetition of the Spanish bolero in its original, unscientific, form. A couple of each sex were not only partners, but danced entirely independent of all the rest, and when they were tired they made room for another party. They begin coy-

ishly, approaching to, and retiring from, each other; then sometimes the one and sometimes the other advances, the other retrograding in proportion; then there is an appearance of disdain, by a stamp of the foot, which is repeated by the other, then a milder advance which is also repeated,—but every body knows what a Spanish bolero is, and why should I describe it: I can only say it was danced with as much decency, and, I believe, innocence, on this occasion, as I ever saw it. As the night advanced, the street was lighted with large flambeaux of pine wood, which burned furiously, and, from their numbers, gave a brilliant and dazzling light. By ten o'clock, the dancers were tired, and the spectators, having smoked their due number of cigars, retreated to beds, which would have made a Witney manufacturer a bankrupt even to look upon.

CHAPTER V.

Servants acquitted for want of evidence.—Take new Servant from the Hospital.—Embark in the Tartar.—Arrival at Acajutla.

IGNACIO, my valet, who was one of the handsomest Creolian lads I had seen, had a love affair in Mexico. He cried lustily when I told him, on setting off, that I must take him to England: now that he had been with the Juez de Letras and acquitted, he was in high spirits; he asked me to give him a written character to the Commission, and also a mare which I bought at Xalapa on my first arrival in the country: as I had no positive evidence against the poor fellow, I gave him both. In order to replace him, I had applied to the old Spanish merchant, Don Juan M——a, who told me he knew of a man whose honesty he could answer for: he was the barber and bleeder of the hospital to which

that worthy old gentleman gave his gratuitous services: I accordingly engaged him. He was a Chinese, about sixty-five years of age, out of forty of which he had been in the habit of attending, as valet, the merchants who were trading between China and Acapulco; thus oscillating, like a pendulum, during the whole of that period, across ninety-six degrees of longitude. He was, in fact, six feet two inches high, and what he had gained in longitude he had lost in latitude, for he was the thinnest man I ever saw, and he usually went by the title with which I christened him, of Don Quixote, though his right name was Henrico. As I was obliged to provide some animal for my other servant, whom I was not anxious to take with me, I told him he might return on my mule, but, not deeming his services worthy of such recompense, I desired him to deliver it to the gentleman who had now succeeded me in my situation at Mexico.

At eleven o'clock on the 4th of May, I

embarked on board the Tartar. There was not much difficulty in shipping my luggage; but my little violent and irritable horse, which I had bought of the rough rider of a dragoon regiment at Mexico, had nearly killed one of the crew, who was fettering him for embarkation: it was evident he objected to the marine service, although he, afterwards, evinced great discipline, and bore a tolerably good character with the sailors, by whom he was surrounded.

My two Mexican servants were anxious to go on board, and I allowed them to accompany me: they were astonished and seemed lost in speechless admiration at so large a house, with all its nice accommodations and conveniences, being able to float upon the water: they had never before seen any thing of the kind larger than a Mexican punt, a vessel shaped exactly like, but half as long again as, those which contribute to the piscatory recreation of gentlemen who angle between Battersea and Staines.

We immediately weighed anchor and

stood out of the bay. By the 6th, it was calculated we had made half the voyage to the port of Sonsonate, to which we were bound.

At four o'clock in the morning of the 7th, the great volcano of Guatemala was in sight; we were then about eighteen leagues from the shore. The coast is not very accurately laid down in the charts; at least, there was a variation between them and the ship's reckoning of seventy miles, in this short voyage. I procured from Mr. James, a midshipman, a copy of an improved plan which he had formed of the coast from Acapulco to Sonsonate*. We had run the distance exactly in five days, having had fair light winds all the way.

About midday on the 9th, we came to anchor off the port, or rather open roadstead, of Acajutla. At eight o'clock the next morning, Lieut. Morgan went ashore with part of my baggage. There happened to be, at the time, a great concourse of people

* The map, made for this work, has been formed from the best charts, collated with this improvement.

assembled there from the capital, to celebrate the festival of the Holy Cross. I forgot to mention that the frigate, on coming to anchor, fired a salute which was answered by the fort of two guns, to the number fired by the frigate. This had drawn the attention of the whole population, whether natives or visitors. The morning was very fine, and we could perceive, by our glasses, that the beach was thronged with holiday-dressed company, who, with their shawls, bonnets, and parasols, had a very European-like appearance: indeed, a painter might have transferred the group, with propriety, to his representation of the coasts of Ramsgate or Brighton. Captain Brown, whose pleasant and affable manners had rendered the voyage in every way agreeable, sent a boat ashore, with the expectation that the company would avail themselves of the opportunity of coming aboard the frigate, probably the only ship of the kind they had ever seen anchor at their port.

The periodical blustering gales which an-

noy the seaman at Vera Cruz prevail equally on this side of the continent. There is generally, about midday, a great bore or swell which sets in upon the coast: this had commenced with such violence, just as the boat was leaving the shore, that the ladies, much to their mortification, were obliged to relinquish their design.

As Captain Brown was desirous of making the best of his voyage to the southward, and as I was anxious not to detain him, I proposed to land, notwithstanding the state of the weather, and I was accordingly rowed ashore about twelve o'clock. When within a quarter of a mile of it, I was transferred, together with the luggage which had not been already landed, into another boat: it was that in which Lieut. Morgan had gone off in the morning, and was supposed better adapted for making the shore. As it was, however, we got sadly ducked: the breakers were so large that, with about every third wave, the boat was completely swamped, and had we not been able to swim, our lives

might have been in jeopardy. The best and safest way of landing on these coasts, if I might offer an opinion, is to pull the boat stem on, till she runs ashore, high and dry; and, if a kedger must be cast to haul her off, the line should be sufficiently long, or else she will be tied down to the buffetting of the waves. I conclude I am right in this opinion, for it was immediately authenticated by the spontaneous observation of the parties ashore, two or three of whom were English merchants resident in Sonsonate. One of them pointed out to me a boat's crew who landed immediately after us from a merchant vessel lying in the roads, and who, from a knowledge of the tremendous nature of these breakers, which will not admit of a boat lying off afloat, had contrived to reach the shore perfectly dry.

The frigate having now fired another salute, the same was returned by the fort, as regularly as its two guns would enable it to do so. It was fortunate that some of my baggage had been sent ashore in the morn-

ing, otherwise I should not have had a change of dry clothes.

Don Miguel Espinosa de los Monteros is administrator of the customs at this port: he is a civil and intelligent man: he took me about the place; and, as the untoward manner of my landing was the subject, at the moment, uppermost in our thoughts, he was naturally led to revert to a matter, which it appeared had long claimed his attention, and which was the formation of a harbour. He pointed out to me the manner in which the object might be effected, and the facilities appeared to me to be so great, that I have little doubt an English engineer would be able to accomplish it for less than £20,000.

Don Miguel's was of course an open house, on occasion of the festivities which were going on at the port; accordingly, his great parlour was filled with groups of company of all descriptions. On the window-seat, smoking cigars, sat his pretty little daughter with three other Sonsonate misses,

as brown as berries and as merry as grigs. From their ears hung suspended large flat hoop ear-rings of pure gold: some of them wore a profusion of gold chains round their neck, and some of them strings of pearls, which, in their unwrought state, looked more like teeth than the teeth of the wearer (though not in most instances) looked like pearls. Don Miguel's wife had got possession, ex officio, of one of the hammocks, and the other was vacated for my acceptance, by a Guatemalian dandy. Although of the Mexican genus, he is a variety of the species: he wears the Mexican poncho or cloak, and sometimes the stamped leather leggings, but his dress is altogether plainer: it is seldom ornamented with gold or silver embroidery: his jacket is usually plain cotton, and when he wears woollen, it is more generally an English-cut frock-coat: his hat is also English, except when travelling, when it gives place to a large slouched one of straw or other light material, better calculated to keep off the sun's

rays.—Dishes in succession were placed on different parts of the long massy table which occupied the greater part of the hall; —to every one in their turn was brought a dish of frixoles, and as there was no want of attention on the part of the host's servants to the demands of the guests, I naturally concluded that the numerous parties which were thus accommodated would pay for their respective entertainment. Some guitars now struck up before the door; and about a dozen couple began to waltz. I felt a little inclined to join them, but could not screw my courage to the sticking point: I had hardly got the better of my ducking. I found that, with regard to propriety, I should not have been wrong if I had done so, for the party was highly respectable, and consisted of young persons of the best families of the provincial town of Sonsonate. Most of them were about to keep up the festivities for two or three days longer at Acajutla; but as three of the English merchants were about to return that evening, and

kindly offered me their advice and assistance on the journey, I set off with them, about five o'clock in the evening.

There is a carriage-road the whole way from the port to the town, principally over a fine green sod, and through avenues intersecting a thick wood, which, in the summer time, is so umbrageous as hardly to leave the route, where the road should be, distinguishable. This wood is infested by a small tiger, which is very fierce, but seldom attacks a man, unless affronted: he does not require the same provocation to assault the herds, especially the calves and young mules. The bulls are so well acquainted with his malicious intentions that, forgetting their mutual animosities, they sometimes congregate for the general protection, in which case the tiger frequently gets the worst of the battle.

The guaco, with its parasitical tendrils, clinging to the gigantic trees which girt the path, assures us of the presence of the most noxious serpents; for, where-

ever these are found, the natives tell you that the guaco, the unfailing antidote to all their poisons, is also at hand. The root and branches of this plant, which greatly resembles the vine, divested of its foliage, are equally effective; and its power is so instantaneous and astonishing, that, had not the stories of its efficacy been repeated by persons of veracity who have tried its effect on their persons, I could hardly credit them. Some of the snakes here are so venomous that the person bitten generally dies in the course of twenty minutes: if, however, he be provided with the guaco, he bites a bit, and applies the saliva to the part: he also swallows the saliva arising from the mastication, for a few hours, and he need have no further apprehension; he is quite well.

A young man of the name of Rascon, who accompanied me to England, and of whom I shall hereafter speak, told me that he has taken up in the palm of his hand that dreadful little viper called the tamaul-

pas, the bite of which is instant death, and that the reptile became instantly inert and torpid, because he had in his hand a small piece of this wonderful plant. Another person, whose servant had been bitten by the same kind of snake, was dying of a mortification which had taken place in his arm: a strong decoction of the root in brandy was poured down his throat, and also applied to the part affected: he was cured, and never afterwards felt any effect from the wound. Might not this wonderful remedy be applied to cases of hydrophobia? Not to speak of its beneficial qualities in cases of agues, dysentery, fever, and generally all those maladies which are peculiar to the human constitution in the places where it is found, I can answer for its being of a very harmless nature, for I took it by the advice and after the example of the English gentlemen, almost daily, with a view of preventing sickness, and must conclude it had the effect, never having suffered from indisposition whilst

residing at Sonsonate, or other places where the climate is considered to be prejudicial to European constitutions. On leaving the port, I could not prevail on Don Miguel, the administrador, to accept of any payment for the accommodation he had afforded me; but being desirous of shewing him some acknowledgement, I gave him an English broad sword, with which he was exceedingly delighted: he began to dry and clean it from the effects of the salt-water, an operation which, those who know the effect of that element on steel are aware of, he would often have to repeat.

CHAPTER VI.

Reception at Sonsonate.—Description of the town, and manners of the inhabitants.

WHILST at Acapulco, I had fallen into company with the Acting Consul's next door neighbour, a respectable merchant, whose name was Don Jose Domingo Indart: he gave me letters of introduction to the family of Doña Vicente Rascon y Cuellar. These letters are not mere matters of ceremony or politeness, as they are often considered in Europe, but are more like a draft on the person to whom they are addressed, not exactly for so much cash, but for its equivalent, namely for board and lodging and every reasonable entertainment. The lady to whom my introduction was given was absent with her family at the capital of Guatemala, it being then in fact, the Guatemalian, as we here call it the London, season. Her daughter, Doña Ger-

trudis Oyarzin, however, remained: she was awaiting the return of her husband, a young man of old Spanish origin, and who was now absent at San Blas, on his mercantile business: I had also a particular introduction to him, and was, of course, asked to partake of the hospitality of his house, which is one of the best in Sonsonate; but, as the invitation of this transatlantic Penelope was not, as it ought not to have been, under the circumstances, very pressing, I preferred taking up my abode in the house of one of the English gentlemen who were settled here.

Wednesday, 11th May. The venerable commandant of the town, Don L. de Padillo, this morning, paid me a visit: he informed me he had been apprised by the government of my expected arrival, and that it was his wish to shew me every possible attention. The next day, Don Manuel Romero also called on the part of the deputies of the State of Sonsonate, one of whom was Don Manuel Rodriquez, late ambassa-

dor to the United States, and the other the Padre Peña, curate of the town. In the course of the day, I visited the Padre Geronimo Zelaya, an Augustin friar: he was residing at the monastery, which was a small establishment of the kind, containing not more than half a dozen brethren. He had devoted his mind particularly to statistical subjects; and had just written a sketch of the political state of San Salvador, the manuscript of which, for it had not been published, he had the generosity to give me. I found in it much valuable information in making up my report for His Majesty's Government. I also became acquainted with the Comptroller of the Customs, Don Dionisio Mensia, and with the Gefe Politico, Don Felipe de Vega. From the former of these two I learnt that the collection of the duties, owing to the disorganization that had arisen from the revolution, was attended with the greatest difficulties; that smuggling and bribery were carried on to a serious extent,

and that the authorities had no power sufficient to prevent it. At the same time, he added that he had no doubt that, as soon as the government was settled, the receipts of the customs would be more than doubled.

The town of Sonsonate is large and straggling; but it contains many good houses, all built in the usual Spanish fashion. They are only one story high, forming three or four sides of a square, with a court-yard in the centre. The most respectable families think it no degradation to be engaged in trade: as there is no bank and no interest for money, this is the only way in which they can employ their capitals. Most of the richer classes of inhabitants derive their incomes from the cattle bred upon their estates and their crops of indigo, cochineal, and tobacco, which they barter with the European merchants for dry goods; retailing the latter for the consumption of the natives.

The chief kind of manufacture peculiar to this town is that of fancy shell-work, of

which they make large quantities, imitating with shells of the most diminutive size, which they stick together in a sort of mosaic, the most beautiful flowers. By this article, and some little fancy birds and beasts, wrought, with equal ingenuity, in silk and velvet, they carry on an export trade to Cartagena, Peru, and other parts of the Western coast, to the amount of £10,000 sterling per annum. There is one large church, which, of course, occupies, as in all Spanish towns, one side of the grand Plaza or square. It is a large antique building, and has no architectural beauty to recommend it: the internal ornaments are uncouth and mean; but it is sufficiently spacious and commodious for the population, which consists almost entirely of Indians.

There are no families, altogether Spanish, residing here: some few remain who have intermarried, or are connected, with the Creolians. Of the latter there are also very few: they form, in this province, not one

fiftieth part, perhaps, of the population. It is, therefore, very unusual to see any but dark coloured inhabitants. Some of the finest of them, in personal appearance, are a mixture of Africans and Indians; though many of the latter, especially the young people, are interesting and handsome. The state of nudity in which they are accustomed to appear in public seems outrageous and highly indelicate to a European beholder. Neither the men nor the women have any other clothing than a short apron round their middle. The mode of tying this apron distinguishes the married from the unmarried female.

Having passed a very restless night, from the intensity of the heat, greater, I think, than any I had experienced in these countries, I had risen early to refresh myself with a walk in the morning air. In proceeding through the town, I met groups of Indians, men, women, and girls, bearing on their shoulders fruits and vegetables for the market. They were all heavily burthened,

but being disincumbered, as I before mentioned, from all unnecessary, or as we should rather think, necessary, clothing, they glided along with a sort of quick ambling pace at the rate of from four to five miles an hour. Each member of the different families carried a burthen in proportion to its sex and age: little children of five or six years old, obliged to be on the run to keep up with their parents, were thus training to the duties which they were bound to fulfil, without change or intermission, during the whole course of their lives, even to the age, should they be fortunate enough to reach it, of their hoary grandsires who were tottering by their side. I found that they all, without exception, on reaching the Plaza, after having deposited their burthens, went to pay their devotions in the church. Many of them took their bundles in with them, and I was pleased to see the simple but humble offering which some of them would make by sprinkling the floor of the church, for there

was no pavement, with leaves and flowers, or as the Poet would call it, "the early incense of the spring." They prayed without books, for their devotion was the language of the heart, and their rustic offering seemed like the humble tribute of the children of nature to nature's God.—In the evening, I took a ride with the English gentlemen to witness an Indian fête, at a hamlet called the Barrio del Angel, about half a league from the town.

The Indians of whom I have above spoken, are not properly residents in the town or in the suburbs, but country or provincial people. The class of inhabitants which met my observation this evening, appeared to be somewhat more civilized; many of them wore shoes and stockings, the men trowsers, and the women petticoats to their ankles. The latter were deeply flounced at the bottom with a bordering different from the petticoat itself, which was a bright scarlet or some other gorgeous colour. There was, however, a neatness

and cleanliness about their dress and general appearance superior to what I had observed in the same classes in Mexico.

The fair was carried on at a rising ground, at the extremity of a wood of bananas and other tropical plants. It was surrounded by the cocoa-nut tree, which spread its fan-shaped branches, as it were, to protect and shelter this pleasing sequestered spot. In one part of it was a blacksmith's forge, and in another a most indifferent sugar-mill: they seemed to testify that the arts and conveniencies of life, though not unknown, were known only upon a moderate and humble scale. The lanes, which led in different directions to this spot, were narrow and now so overgrown by the rank vegetation, that two persons could not ride abreast along them; and the little children, as you could perceive them in their white *mantas*, flitting amongst the bushes, put you in mind of rabbits, in the moonlight, sporting amidst the furze.

The next day, at dinner, I remarked two

large silver salvers, filled with various kinds of sweetmeats, disposed in fantastic shapes. It was a present, they said, from a lady to me. I had no difficulty in resolving from whom this mark of polite attention came: it was the present of the amiable Doña Gertrudis, who, at times, sent me also other dainties to satisfy for, what, I have no doubt, she felt a breach of hospitality on her part,—her not having prevailed upon me to take up my abode in her house.

I must now introduce my readers to Don Simon B——o, a dependiente or managing man of the establishment of the family to which I was consigned at Guatemala. He was about five feet six in height, dark complexion, black eyes and hair, with hollow cheeks and of slender stature. His employment was to make sales of the indigo and other articles produced on the family estate, also to purchase wearing apparel and other European goods at the capital; disposing of them either wholesale at the warehouse at Sonsonate, or retailing them,

in his journeys which he occasionally made through the provinces, on account of the firm. He was a Guatemalian traveller, in that sense of the appellation best understood in the commercial world. His journey to the metropolis was fixed for the 16th; and I was anxious to set out as soon as possible. As he was the very character I wished to fall in with, being, as he was, so well fitted to acquaint me with the practical detail of the manner and habits of the trade of these countries, I endeavoured to induce him to depart with me on an earlier day: he was a kind, good natured, man, but had a dash of pomp about him, which shewed a just estimation of the importance of his own functions, and gave me a lesson as to the respect and consideration due to them, which I endeavoured not to forget. I cannot pretend to describe characters with the inimitable pencil of Washington Irving; I would, therefore, merely say that he was his "Master Simon," entered into business.

The strictness of his arrangements would not allow of their being put aside: and as the business upon which I was travelling was of very different importance, I, of course, accommodated myself to the plans of my proposed companion.

I used to go to bathe, about two miles from the town, in a small river called the Tequisquilco, the water of which is beautifully transparent and cool. It was formed, a few years since, by the irruption of Isalco, the volcano of Sonsonate, which is about fifteen leagues off. It is eighty years since its first irruption took place: the same, however, has been carried on, at intervals, and frequent light shocks of earthquakes are, consequently, experienced in the neighbourhood. It is most dangerous when not burning; so that the flames I saw issuing from it were at once awful and satisfactory.

The inhabitants of Sonsonate, particularly the Creoles, are dreadfully afflicted with the goître, or as they here call them,

buches. At the base of the mountain in question is a sulphureous lake, where, they say, these invalids are in the habit of going, at certain seasons of the year, to drink the waters, which are considered a specific cure: if they are so, there appear to be very few of these unfortunate people who have availed themselves of this easy method of getting rid of this disgusting malady.

The Intendancy of San Salvador, being now united to the Alcaldia Mayor of Sonsonate, forms one of the five states of the federal constitution, under the title of San Salvador. The Alcaldia of Sonsonate contains twenty-one settlements, with 45,000 souls distributed through eleven parishes, being twenty leagues from east to west, and twelve from north to south. Notwithstanding that the ecclesiastical establishment is larger and richer in this country, in proportion to its size and population, than in Mexico, the cures are very badly provided.

There are many villages in which mass is not said more than once a year.

The population of the five states of the federation, amounting to 2,000,000, is greater than the world supposed; but the census taken by the Spaniards was always incorrect and under the mark, as the tribute or capitation tax, exacted from the Indians, caused them to suppress their number and amount. This tribute was at the rate of three dollars a year on every male from the age of eighteen to fifty. The last census was taken since its abolition, but the number was still considered short of the actual population, who might have been induced to suppress their returns under the apprehension of the renewal of that tax, or of the substitution of another in its stead.

The Englishmen who were residing at Sonsonate were Mr. Banchard, (who had married a young lady of the country, a niece of the Padre Zelaya, superior of the Augustine monastery,) Mr. Freere, Mr.

Parker, and Mr. Aylwin. They had most of them been in Peru, Chile, and other parts of the continent, and were here engaged both in the coasting trade of the country, and in shipping to England cochineal, hides, indigo and other articles peculiar to the place.

I willingly accepted of their polite attentions, and took my meals with them in a large house occupied by the young married couple. The bride was a small, shy, little girl about fifteen years of age, but plump and healthy, with a pair of bright black eyes which made up, by the force and variety of their expression, for the silence and reserve of her general manner. The high tables, of which I have before spoken, render eating exceedingly awkward, even to a tall person, but with regard to one so short as was our amiable little hostess, it seemed to be a matter of the utmost convenience ; for, laying her chin down on the edge of the plate, with her elbows poised on the table on each side of it, her hands moved alter-

nately from the plate to her mouth, with the slightest possible exertion, like two reversed oars, rowing steadily, out of time. As, during this operation, her eyes fulfilled the office of her tongue, and no time was lost in conversation, she was enabled to work double tides, and always left us, as soon as she had done, to finish the rest of the business by ourselves.

Opposite the door-way, in the centre of the large hall in which we dined, and in front of the place which I occupied at the table, was suspended one of those hammocks of which I have often spoken; it was hung under an awning which surrounded the internal part of the building, and encircling the court-yard. Into this she flung herself with a sort of patient indifference, which had something, however, of an air of listlessness, and, striking one of the pillars of the colonnade with her foot, and the wall on the other side with her hand, she dashed off, all at once, into a full swing. One of her maids immediately came up to

her with a paper cigar which she was smoking to keep alight, and, watching her opportunity, popped it into the hand which was mechanically held out, and which transferred it, in a twinkling, into the mouth of the mistress. The operation was so neatly performed that the oscillation of the swing was not in the slightest degree deranged. A subsidiary kick or thump kept it going for a quarter of an hour, when it gradually stopt; the cigar was smoked,—the lady was asleep,—and our dinner was almost finished.

CHAPTER VII.

Depart for the capital.—Sleepy village of Apaneca.—Mercantile town of Aguachapa; with what happened there.

THE preparations for my journey to the capital having been made by Don Simon, to his entire satisfaction, and consequently to my own, we left Sonsonate about seven o'clock in the morning of the 14th, and passed through three large villages. That of Naquisalco is situated in a large, arid plain, in the centre of which stands a respectable looking church: the country around was well cultivated with different kinds of grain, with Indian corn and European wheat; for the climate was adapted for both.

By eight o'clock, we had reached Salpotetán, a smaller village than any of the former; and drawing up at one of the Indian huts on the road side, regaled our-

selves with a bowl of pure water. I began to think the habits of my new friend, Don Simon, very abstemious. My former companion used to shudder when I put water to my brandy, but this one would not even allow me brandy to my water.

We reached Apaneca about ten o'clock, so called from the mountain at the foot of which it stands: it contains about 1,000 inhabitants, all Indians and mixed castes. It struck me, from the appearance and bearing of the mountain, that it was the town we had remarked as the only symptoms of habitation which we had been able to notice on coasting down to Sonsonate. The belfry-door of the church being open, I ascended to the top of the steeple, when the view of the surrounding country and the ocean, which was just visible, confirmed these conjectures.

We stopped at the house of the padre or curate. His sister, the widow of an officer who died in the late revolution, a matronly woman, above fifty, took care of the esta-

blishment, and put herself, I could perceive, a little out of the way to procure us a good repast. Amongst other things, a pair of pigeons were killed for the purpose: I had little inclination for animal food, and as I had once or twice declined to partake of these birds, our hostess, after assuring me they were pigeons, regarded me with a look of pity, and said, in a whisper to the company, "the señor does not understand what they are; he has not seen such birds before, and *no sabe* (literally translated, 'does not know how,' though it means 'does not like') to eat them." I immediately undeceived her, and taking a bit on my plate, at once preserved her good humour and my reputation as a natural philosopher, in venturing to eat of the rare bird which had been the object of discussion.

On finishing his repast, my companion, Don Simon, took up a large tumbler containing about two pints and a half of water, the greater part of which he conveyed into his stomach, at a draft; and, having rinced

his mouth with the remainder, by squirting the contents on the floor, he lighted his cigar, and laid himself down upon one of the benches to sleep. I took this opportunity to saunter about the village; which was so still that the champing of the mules, eating their maize, might almost be heard from one end of it to the other.

Ovid describes Morpheus as one of the *kindest* of the deities, with his head crowned with poppies: those, who have witnessed his influence in these countries, would add to his titles another, of *most obedient*, and represent him with a cigar in his mouth: I merely throw this out as a hint to the New London University. I began to despair of picking up any information, and returned home with a determination to take my *siesta*, agreeably to the hackneyed, though not less sensible, remark, of when in Rome, to do as they do in Rome.

The threshold of the door was occupied by a large mastiff; who had most uncere-

moniously objected to my entrance in the morning, and when a battle had ensued between us which might have ended disastrously, had he not been called off by his master, who was now asleep: I could not, therefore, depend upon the mediation of that party, and as there was a mere cessation of hostilities between us, not even so favourable as that condition which is diplomatically termed, an armed neutrality, I did not care to disturb the watchful slumber which one of his eyes, that now glared upon me half open, seemed to evince he was enjoying. A cat was laid across his back, lulled in all the security of a minor state which has the countenance and support of a high protecting power. I turned away, listlessly, towards the middle of the road, where there was a small hut and manger, for the accommodation of travellers' mules. Ours had eaten all their corn, and their down-flopped ears and drooping heads made it evident that *they* were asleep. The luggage was strewed around, and, on lifting

up one of the mats to get at my writing desk, I discovered the three muleteers, who were lying stretched upon the ground, having had the precaution thus to shade themselves from the sun, which was now really beaming in all its suffocating splendour. Two out of this triumvirate were also asleep: it was a practical commentary on a well appointed commission.

But where was my servant, the shaver and bleeder from the hospital at Acapulco? I called him two or three times by his right name, Henrico, though in my imagination I always pictured him as Quixote; but he did not appear: I called again, but not very loud; for my voice reechoed so through the dead silence that prevailed that it almost startled me to hear it. There was a slight movement in the hut amongst the mules, and the Chinese came forth with nothing on him but a pair of short cotton trowsers and a night-cap. He stared like a man that had been awakened with the alarm of fire; but take him, all in all, I

had never seen such a thing before, except upon a china tea-pot. I found he had been sleeping in the manger; and, as all the tables in the country are, as I said before, used also for the same purpose, it occurred to me that bed and board might, hereafter, illustrate, as an example, what the logicians style, a distinction without a difference.

I roused up the muleteers; and, Don Simon being now busily engaged in the preparations for our departure, we soon left this drowsy portion of creation behind us, and reached Aguachapa about six in the evening. The road to it is extremely hilly: for the first four miles, it winds round a small mountain, covered with beautiful timber-trees, and on the left, towards the sea, is a large fertile country, well cultivated. The labourers, in gangs from fifty to a hundred each, were returning home to the village, which had manifested so depopulated an appearance during the day: they appeared to be healthy and well fed, happy and contented.

Aguachapa is the most considerable town between Sonsonate and the capital: it contains from five to six thousand inhabitants, who follow the same habits and occupations as the two other towns alluded to. On entering it, the road was nearly blocked up by earthenware, which they had just been taking out of the kiln, and which consisted of utensils of all shapes and sizes for domestic use,—the same constituting one of the staple articles of the manufacture of the place. We alighted at one of the best houses in the town, belonging to a respectable man of the name of Padillo. He was much older than his wife, who, although she had, now living with her, a family of five daughters and three sons, the eldest of whom was seventeen years of age, bore the vestiges of a clever, pretty little woman. She had, doubtlessly, been very handsome, for her little daughters, whose ages were from seven to fourteen, were strikingly so, and all of them very much resembling herself. Her

husband was on a visit to the family to which I had letters in Guatemala. She managed the business, for there was a shop attached to the house, in which was sold almost every thing that the community could require, with great zeal and ability. Mixed with China crapes and India Bandanas were Irish linens and Manchester cottons; and Birmingham cutlery was exposed to sale on the same counter with the coarser implements which the forges of the natives could produce.

I had broken the stirrup of my saddle, and wanted an additional pocket made to my armas de agua: these are skins of deer, or any other animal, which are suspended from the pommel of the saddle, on each side of the horse, reaching down to below his knees, and which, being untied and unfurled, are brought over the thighs of the rider and tied behind, round the waist, so as to render the lower part of the person perfectly impenetrable to the rain. On stopping at any place to rest or refresh,

they are taken off the pommel, and, being stretched upon the ground, form a convenient couch; whilst the pockets of the interior side (the outward is covered with the hair) serve to carry a flasket of liquor, a sandwich box, or any other matter which necessity or convenience may suggest.

The jobs I have alluded to were immediately given to be executed by some cordonniers who belonged to the establishment, but the individuals in question were not altogether shoemakers, for they were now employed in making mule harness and repairing other leathern articles which came within the sphere of their business and ability.

Don Simon was sitting, the greater part of the evening, in deep consultation with our sprightly hostess. She evidently considered him a man in whom she ought to repose the most implicit confidence, as regarded her commercial concerns, and treated him with great attention and respect. His arrival was hailed with delight

by the little girls, for what particular reason I had not yet been able to discover, though I afterwards did. It is true he romped with them like a boy, made funny gestures, wry faces and odd noises, played tricks upon themselves as well as upon their cards, and, in short, proved himself a good-natured man and an active friend of the family. In the evening, a large party dropped in: they had heard, no doubt, of the arrival of an English stranger; and, as this was an event which, like the flowering of one of their nopals in England, happens only once in a century, their curiosity, if such was the motive of the visit, was very pardonable.

The saloon in which the company were assembled was a large room having a door at one end into the street, at the other, an entrance into the sleeping rooms, and, in the centre, leading to the court yard, another large folding door. They were all three open, so that there was plenty of air, though the currents, to which the tenants

are thus exposed, account, satisfactorily, for the tooth and face ache with which they are so often afflicted. The two inner angles of this apartment, which was about twenty-six feet long by fourteen wide, were occupied by beds of the simplest construction, without posts, or, indeed, any other furniture than a mattress. In the day time, therefore, they answered the purpose of sofas; and such linen as was necessary was brought in and deposited on them when they were required for the night. One of them was now occupied by a youth, who was bedridden. He was the eldest son, and his emaciated frame and despondent visage, which still bore traces of the handsome features of the family, bespoke the probability of his early dissolution. The agonies he suffered seemed to be intense. He had, some months ago, injured his instep by a fall from his horse: it had been gradually getting worse, and was on the verge of mortification. The groans which the poor boy uttered, but which he endeavoured to

suppress as much as possible, were heard, at intervals, intermixing with the joyous shouts of the little girls, the solemn periods of the political commentators, and the sprightly repartees of those whose hearts were interested by the passions of gaming or of love: for there was card-playing in one corner of the room; and love-making is a thing of course where young people, being congregated together, find that they have nothing better to do with themselves. The mother would steal occasionally to the couch of her afflicted child, assist him in changing his posture, or lighten the pressure of the bed-clothes; in which office she was occasionally assisted by her daughters. The scene was a mixture of the kindliest sorrows and the thoughtless frivolities and enjoyments of life, blended—as it were, the rose with the thorn—the bud with the worm.

I said there was a door between the saloon and the sleeping apartments of the ladies: I was mistaken; there was only an

open door-way: I was sitting in the window seat next to it, and, finding they were undressing to go to bed, removed from it. As we were to set off early in the morning, I could have wished to have retired also to the vacant couch in the apartment which had been prepared for my reception; but I dreaded to pass the night in the room with the poor lad, whose bursts of agony now broke, with periodical uniformity of length and tone, on the stillness which prevailed. The reiterated voice of distress is afflicting, at all times, but most so when it is out of our power to relieve the cause of the affliction: we then become identified with the afflicted, and must leave the rest to patience and endurance. The sympathy, however, with which we witness the miseries of others is, perhaps, not unfrequently mixed with the certain, though secret, satisfaction of our own exemption from them. Having at length retired to rest, I was endeavouring to amuse my mind with some such reflection, when I heard a whis-

pering in the apartment: it was a female voice in conversation on some subject of a deep and apparently highly interesting nature. As there were no glazed windows, the shutters of the room were all closed, excepting a small pannel which was cut in one of them, and which admitted a feeble ray of moonlight. By these means, I was enabled to distinguish two figures, and soon found that the persons in question were Don Simon and the eldest daughter. "I cannot," said the female voice, "without my mother's consent; and if I did, my sister Guadalupe would be so jealous, that I should never have a moment's peace." He answered, that she was foolish to think either of her mother or her sister in the business; that she had nothing to do but to consult her own choice; she had already declared it, and abide by it she must. Thus saying, he walked off, whistling as he came to my end of the apartment, and throwing back an "A Dios" to the "buenas noches," uttered in the tender agitated voice of the

young lady, he flung himself into the hammock, with the greater part of his clothes on, and, by the sonorous nature of his respiration, seemed to be asleep, in the course of five minutes.

This despotic kind of love-making was really very extraordinary: it was plain the affections of the young lady were, at best, but indifferent towards him; but, then, what could she do against the "sic volo" of this Western Grand Señor! The lamentations of the poor boy and my own reflections on the scenes I had just witnessed, disturbed my rest. I began to think dubiously of my companion, and how I should measure my behaviour towards him the next day: I had not, hitherto, sufficiently estimated his self-importance; which, although something disgusting, I, now, resolved to humour, on account of its whimsicality. Scarcely had day-light dawned, when, being awake, I perceived standing in the door-way, the beautiful little girl whose future views and interests in life had

formed no small part of my contemplation during the night. She was enveloped in a loose night-gown, slightly closed round the waist. Her long black hair fell in graceful and natural profusion down each side of her neck: there was an air of slight anxiety and agitation in her look which gave to her features, which were delicately pretty, an animated cast of interest, which I had not before observed in them. She stepped forward a few paces, and cried, in a half whisper, "Don Simon!" She repeated the name, but no answer was given; again, and still all was silent. Poor thing! thought I, she has repented of her obstinacy, and Don Simon's determination will be gratified and fulfilled. This proved to be the truth; but in a manner very different from what I had anticipated. I was surprised, and, perhaps, a little mortified, to find that I had been wrong in all my conclusions, with respect to the scenes which I had witnessed. The denouement was of a nature perfectly distinct from any that

I had contemplated or imagined. Don Simon had risen, and the interview was, now, renewed in the presence of the other sister. I was still in bed, and, being wide awake, could not help listening to the conversation, when I discovered that it was to the following purport.

Don Simon began by insisting on the folly of their wishing to be all alike: he had only brought with him enough for one; and oh, my wounded sensibility! this was not love, but a piece of scarlet pelisse cloth, which was very scarce in the country, but which, by dint of his influence in the line, together with the alacrity which he always manifested in doing a kindness, he had contrived to procure in fulfilment of a commission given to him by the elder young lady. The discussion, however, which ensued was not without its interest: the colour, quality, width, and quantity of the fabric which was to make their pelisses was discussed with an order and pertinacity which were justi-

fied by the importance of the subject. Some blue cloth might be obtained, perhaps, at Guatemala, but then the pelisse which was already purchased was English, and it was finally resolved, to the satisfaction of all parties, but especially of Don Simon, who had carried his point, as he seemed determined to do, from the beginning, with the elder daughter, that, as the piece of scarlet cloth could not be matched, they should await the arrival of the next vessel from England which might bring them a fresh importation of that, to them so indispensable, article of British manufacture.

CHAPTER VIII.

Occurrences between Aguachapa and Zuaquiniquiniquilapa.

On Sunday, the 15th of May, we left Aguachapa about six o'clock. The country through which we passed was champaign, but studded, at intervals, in the distance, with fine forest trees. On the left, was a large lake, a solitary waste of water, but which, being lighted, instantaneously, by the tropical sun, in his rapid rising, dazzled like a mirror, when its reflection is suddenly flashed upon the sight. The brilliancy of the scene, and the freshness of the morning air, were highly exhilarating: my companion was lively and *chirping*. I found he had many small commissions to do for the young ladies, besides the important one above detailed,—such as combs and other trinkets. He informed me that the latter could only be repaired in the capital, where

they were made. He shewed me a particular kind of twisted gold chain, properly designated Guatemalian, as another kind, perfectly distinct in structure, is called Panamian. I brought one of the former with me to England, and, having broken it, for it is very delicate, have never been able to get it properly repaired, even by the best London workmen.

The tree which I had seen in my route to Acapulco, bearing cherries, without leaves, was here very common: my companion informed me that it was called *picaro*. How this term applies, which means *rogue*, with all its variety of senses, as applied either to the offender at the Old Bailey, who is sometimes forgiven after the commission of the act, or to the transgressor in the coteries of the Mesdames Vitula and Lubentia, who feels that he is forgiven whilst he commits it,—I cannot, I confess, conceive: perhaps, however, it meant that the fruit was piquant: in truth, it was very sour.

The next natural curiosity we met with was the zopilote: about fifty or sixty of these birds were standing in state round a dead mule, whilst one, distinguished by a tuft or civic cap upon his head, was perched upon the carcase and contemplating it with an hurried air of dignity and satisfaction: he leered into each morsel, first with one eye and then with the other, as a gentleman surveys a well-loaded table with his quizzing-glass. When I last saw a portion of this extraordinary community, they were taking their *siesta*, or sleeping after dinner;—they were now in watchful expectation of the moment when they might commence that repast. Don Simon told me that the bird who was playing so conspicuous a part was the one who had had the good fortune to find the mule, and was consequently considered the *alcalde*, or lord mayor, whilst the others, who had kindly congregated to help him to eat it, were *senadores*, or common council men. Indeed it looked very like it,—for, after a reverent

bow of the head on the part of the alcalde, which might be compared to a short grace, this worshipful and worshipping company flew helter skelter upon the repast. We waited some time to see the end of it,—but despairing of doing so, proceeded on our route.

About mid-day, we came to the edge of a river, half as wide over as the Thames, at the new tunnel. We had passed, for the last six miles, along its banks, through a country so beautiful as to make it difficult to describe it. The road was a smooth, green, turf, skirted with luxuriant and flowering shrubs, now contracted, and now opening into spacious glens, and so winding in its course, that, every now and then, the river, which seemed to oppose our further progress, was, quickly, in our rear, and snatched from our speculation. We came, however, at length to "that bourne from which no traveller returns" — who determines to go forward: we were on the bank of the river, and, to my astonishment, learnt we had to wade through it. Whilst

deliberating on the nature of this aquatic excursion, I was agreeably surprised at finding a large party, chiefly women and young girls, who, it seems, had been to church at a hamlet on this side of the water, and were now returning, already congregated on the bank. They walked boldly into the river, and raising their garments as they advanced, contrived to effect a tolerably dry and decent landing. If the river had been deep enough, it would have been well calculated for a tunnel, for its bed was rocky: the rocks, which are now smooth from the rapidity of the current, will probably be worn through before a tunnel is built under them.

We had progressed, as the Americans properly term it, a small distance on the other side of the river, when we came to a dale, interspersed with plots of rising ground, studded with palm-trees and thick dwarf verdure. It was now midday, and the vertical position of the sun scarce threw a shadow upon the sward; but as the fo-

liage was at intervals impenetrable to its rays, the ground was dappled with abrupt variations of light and shade: under the latter, we found a party of travellers bivouacking: they consisted of two or three native gentlemen and their servants, who had made a fire and were cooking some fowls and other edibles for their dinner: the proximity of the river assisted these culinary operations; contributing also, by the purity and freshness of its water, to the invigoration of man and beast; for they all drank freely of it together; verifying the, abstractedly true, but uncourteous, remark, that "a water-drinker drinks like a beast." Two or three other persons had fallen in with, and were accompanying, the party in question; amongst them, was an old seaman: he had been a British sailor, and residing some time at Sonsonate, where he had endeavoured to obtain a livelihood in the capacity of a cook. The poor fellow was suffering under a complication of disorders; the first of which was old age, the

others being rheumatism, asthma, lameness, and I know not what besides. He was, now, going to the Atlantic coast, to get some sea-bathing, and also to put himself under a course of the *guaco*, which Don Simon informed me was considered an infallible cure in cases where mercury was no longer efficacious. Although the man was a disgusting object, I might, perhaps, have allowed him to fall in with our retinue, but I was assured he was a bad character, and gave him a trifle to wash my hands of him.

The journey continued, this evening, through the picturesque scenes which I have attempted to describe; and, at three o'clock, we had reached a small Indian hut, at which they were unloading our mules. It was situated about a stone's throw out of the green lanes through which we were passing, surrounded with lofty, umbrageous, trees: under one of these, near the cottage and a pig-sty, preparations were made for our repast. The fowl was admirably dressed with red Chile pepper, and, being

eaten with garbanzas, or beans, was savoury and wholesome. This dish is, in fact, to the natives of America, what the curry is to the Asiatics.

In these countries, a man never shaves himself on a journey: he omits the operation, also, when he is, however slightly, indisposed. In travelling, there is an evident advantage in not shaving too often: the moustache is a great protection to the lips, by shading and preventing them from chapping. After dinner, I called for my dressing-case, not having shaved for some days, and commenced the operation, to the evident astonishment of Don Simon, who shewed, by his gestures, that he considered the act as bordering upon madness,—and to the discomfiture of my barber-servant, Henrico, who thought it an encroachment upon his privileges. The fact was that, what with the growth of my beard and the peculiarity of my dress, I hardly knew myself, and resolved, before I put down the glass, to know what manner of man I was.

I had scarcely finished my rural toilette, when it was time to start. Don Simon was already mounted, with a fresh lighted cigar, and we set off together, on companionable terms; for I had, myself, acquired the habit of smoking, first in my own defence, and now for my amusement and satisfaction. This habit is considered salutary, and, in many parts of the country, especially in the low swampy situations, absolutely necessary for the preservation of health. The Dutch Government enforces the use of smoking amongst the soldiery, and the guardhouses are supplied, during the summer, with turf, for the purpose of lighting their pipes. I attribute much of the good health I enjoyed in my travels to conforming to the practice and usages of the places through which I passed; and I would advise every traveller, in South America, to do so as far as he is able.

The insect, called the cigarra, makes a chirping noise like the cricket, but which, when heard from the multiplied throats of

these insects, which seem to line all the paths by myriads, resembles the hissing of boiling water. When the rays of the sun have parched up the plain, and the heat is glimmering in the atmosphere, these little insects seem, unnecessarily, to be reminding you that it is "hissing hot." My companion told me that Æsop had written a fable about them, called the Horniga and Cigarra; that they died singing, and that they were vulgarly called *chicharra*.

We now entered some lanes, with gates, here and there, so disposed as to impound or keep out cattle, and giving one the idea of those leading into an English village. That at which we arrived contained about 1,000 souls. As every Spanish town and settlement is formed on the same model, which varies only as to elegance and size, this village had, of course, its grand Plaza, in the middle of which was a tree, and which, for it was, certainly, one of the largest I had seen in these parts, completely shadowed with its branches the whole area of

the place. A few of these trees would be very useful on Hounslow Heath, on a rainy review day; for each of them is calculated to shelter at least half a regiment of horse. Of course, our mules and horses wanted no other stabling, and there was plenty of accommodation left for the retinue of a large party of ladies and gentlemen who arrived shortly after us, on their way from the capital to the interior. They were all mounted on mules; some of them with single and others with double saddles: the lady's single saddle consists of a small dickey, or three-sided cushioned seat, with a step for the feet; in short it is a lady's Brighton donkey-saddle. When they ride double, the gentleman sits on the mule's haunches, with a saddle properly shaped for the purpose, having a flat square surface in front, on which his fair companion is seated, with her legs on the off side or rather shoulders of the animal: in this case, she has no step or stirrup to support her feet, but generally sits cross-legged, trusting, for her

equilibrium, to the good offices of the gentleman, whose left arm thus, naturally, surrounds her waist: his bridle is held in the right hand, which, as all my readers know, is the wrong one, but the other being engaged, he has no opportunity of helping himself, or even of lighting his cigar; so that this business devolves, as a matter of course, upon his companion; and thus the journey is accompanied, as might be expected, with a general interchange of mutual good offices. I never passed a party of these travellers but I remarked that those, who were riding in this fashion, seemed to be the most cheerful and contented amongst them, and the least tired with the journey;—a circumstance very difficult to account for, since the position of each is thus rendered very cramped and uncomfortable.

A stout, handsome negro-like woman, a real Patagonian in stature, with her long black hair falling in crisp corkscrew ringlets down her neck, and more scantily attired

than decency would suggest, received me at the door of her hut, with a courteous smile. She was about thirty years of age, which, in this country, is far beyond the period of youth; and her face was slightly wrinkled; but her teeth exhibited an unbroken palisade of untarnished ivory, behind the embankments of two wide pouting lips: she was a fine specimen of the caste between the African and Indian: in her youth, she must have been extremely handsome, and, I doubt not, have had many admirers. She was very civil and obliging, by giving us such accommodation as her house afforded: this consisted of two small apartments, one entering into the street, and, by another door, into the yard behind, and the other leading from the former by a door-way, on the side. The latter was the bed-room; and the former, being totally unoccupied by any particle of furniture, we disposed our beds in it; which, being done, left a very small portion, at the other end, vacant for the operation of cooking our sup-

per. Our hostess was accompanied in this duty by two other females, the one an ugly weird old woman, with a copper face, and white hair, and the other a little delicate girl about sixteen years old, with fair complexion, slightly bronzed, and with auburn coloured ringlets. The old woman was squatted down, before the cauldron, like one of the witches in Macbeth; whilst the young one seemed a fairy who did her bidding; and, as Henrico was communing with the gigantic hostess, in the doubtful glimmer with which the hut was lighted, I bethought me of the Knight of Salamanca in obsequious parley with some enchantress of his fancy.

The meal was now dished and ready to be served, but, as there was no table to put it upon, two or three trunks properly arranged before my bed, fully answered the purpose; whilst the latter fulfilled, very conveniently, the office of seats; on which we could recline or sit upright, at option. This was, so far, better than the "incum-

bunt epulis" of the Romans, who had only one posture at their meals, and every body knows that was lying. As the supper disappeared, my companion suggested the propriety of anticipating our wants for the next day's journey; as the place we were about to stop at would, in all probability, not be provided with any thing we could eat: accordingly, something was prepared, which, however, kept the cooking business going on, to our great annoyance, for an hour or two longer; and it was midnight before I could close my eyes. This was the more disagreeable, as we started, the next morning, at half past four, and as my rest had been disturbed, even during this short interval, with a rather peculiar occurrence: the fact was, I was awakened, about an hour after I had fallen asleep, with a sort of tickling sensation in my face; and, jumping up, I thought I could distinguish something black upon my pillow: at first, I guessed it was the cat, as it seemed to make a sort of purring noise, and felt hairy: I accordingly

flopped it with my handkerchief, and off it popt through a hole in the partition of the room which was composed of matting and broken reed-work, and constituted the head of the bed: whilst imagining what kind of animal it could possibly be, the matting was again slightly raised, and I immediately discovered my mistake:—it was merely the negress's head which had inadvertently borrowed a part of my pillow, placed in close contact with her own on the other side of this moveable partition: I could not be offended with the whimsical *tête-à-tête*, though it was certainly a very *extraordinary intrusion.*

We travelled nine leagues without drawing bit, when we stopped at a hamlet, called El Oratorio, to lunch. I confess I was half asleep when I set off, and the servants seemed to be quite so, for they had left the lunch behind them which they had been sitting up all night to dress. We passed through a barrier which appeared like a small turnpike gate, and came on a green

lawn, shaded with two or three large trees, under which we reposed, consoling our appetites with maize-fritters, tomates, and other light refreshments which the place afforded. Six leagues from hence, is the village of Los Esclavos, which we reached about five o'clock in the evening; passing over a fine stone bridge of five arches thrown across a foaming cataract rather than a river. This architectural work, which appeared to be the only one that I had seen, since my landing, as a structure worthy of remark, and as testifying the civilization of the country, was erected so late as the year 1792, and repaired in 1810. The village itself is a poor place, consisting, chiefly, of Indians who are employed in agriculture. It was formerly of much greater consequence; and, independently of the bridge, the road in and out of the town is not only good, but has the appearance of being actually kept in repair;—a circumstance which, I since understood, is, in some mea-

sure, the fact, and so much the more remarkable, as it is, probably, almost the only road that is repaired throughout the whole of the continent of South America.

On proceeding out of the town towards the capital, you ascend a hill about a mile and a half long, a little winding, with ditches on the sides to carry off the water, and with plastered embankments, surmounted by a railing: it had quite a European look, and only wanted the Brighton Rocket or Birmingham Balloon to come rattling down it at the rate of seventeen miles an hour, to assure you that it was a veritable piece of M'Adamism. What added to the delusion, on my part, was the meeting with two sportsmen with shooting-jackets and guns, who were getting over the fence into the road, as we passed: a boy accompanied them, carrying a fawn which they had just killed, and which we, of course, wished to purchase, seeing that we were in the habit of living chiefly by

pot-luck: our request was ungraciously refused, the object of it being retained and carried off rather in an unmannerly way: it was, doubtlessly, the lord of the manor and his game keepers that we had fallen in with.

CHAPTER IX.

Short notice of the Village of Zuaquiniquiniquilapa.—Arrive at the Capital.

To make short of our disappointment, we reached Zuaquiniquiniquilapa, and took possession of a large empty house which occupied one side of the Plaza or grand square. It was a building with a deep viranda in front, ascended by three steps, which ran the whole length of it, and leading into a hall equally long and about half the breadth, which might be about fifteen feet: it was a sort of town hall, and now let out for the accommodation of travellers. The men here wore short white drawers, with a supplementary kind of pouch hanging down behind, below the knees, like a hood fixed on to a regular pair of small-clothes. There seemed to be neither utility nor ornament in this species of dress: the

inhabitants, however, were very proud of it, calling it *Calzon rajada*, which is the Spanish name for it, and means rayed breeches, but the Indians call it *Bombache*, the meaning of which I could not ascertain. The distance from Los Esclavos to Zuaquiniquiniquilapa is *seven* leagues, which the traveller may recollect by the number of syllables in the word, which are *eight*,—subtracting, of course, one league from the name, on account of the length of it.

Although we had travelled twenty-two leagues the preceding day, my companion was up and stirring by four o'clock. Indeed, I was greatly indebted to him for the trouble he took in all the business of the journey; but, although I almost conceived myself bound to submit to his directions in every thing which related to it, I was fain to take another nap, after he had called me: this I could not effect, owing to the noise and bustle occasioned by removing the luggage from the viranda, the clamorous shouts of the peons, as they

harnessed the refractory mules, (some of which, perhaps, were of opinion, like myself, that they had not had their due portion of rest,) and, last and not least, on account of the evident, though suppressed, impatience of Don Simon, at my laziness. He was traversing up and down the chamber with a firm step and hurried air: his hands in his pockets, *without* a cigar in his mouth, alternately whistling or humming a stave of one of his favourite airs. I had just made up my mind to throw off the bed clothes and rise, whilst I was to all appearance fast asleep; when, as he was passing close to my bed-side, his foot happened, fortunately, to catch in a part of them; and as he was walking very quick, drew them all off for me. He was about to apologize for what he had done, when I assured him there was no necessity for his doing so, for I had just determined to get up. He seemed pleased at the accidental coincidence of the affair, and thrusting his hand into the inner pocket of his jacket for

his cigar case, and selecting one of the smoothest and best twisted *puros* he could find, presented it to me whilst he struck a light from materials which he always carried suspended to a silken cord about his neck. They were composed of a dried bark called *mecha*, peculiar to the country, enveloped in the cord alluded to, and terminated with a silver box wrought into the figure of a lamb, the body of which contained a piece of flint and steel compactly fitted into the apparatus. As I remembered the irritation which I was sure he had been undergoing on my account, and now witnessed the good humour and complacency with which he performed the operation, I could not help apostrophising him, with "You are yoked with a lamb that carries anger as the flint bears fire, which, much enforced, shews a hasty spark, and, straight, is cold again."

We were now on our last stage to the capital of Guatemala; and as I approached

it, I felt, at every step, fresh spirit and invigoration. The object of ambition which I had dwelt upon in all the moments left me for reflection, whilst at Mexico, was on the point of being realised: I was about to enter the capital of a country not only unknown to Europeans, but one with which even the South Americans themselves were little acquainted. I was assured by my friend Don Juan de Mayorga, that I should be received by the president and authorities with kindness and attention, and I had the gratifying prospect of, perhaps, being able to do justice to the importance of my commission, and of being the humble instrument of opening the same connexion between that country and Great Britain, which had been just established between the latter power and the republic of Mexico. When the heart is cheerful, there are few objects from which it will not draw some source of enjoyment:—for expectation carries in it the leaven which crowns the

excitement of the moment, whilst it sweetens, strengthens, and embalms the prospects of the future.

Wrapped in these reflections, I passed a large drove of pigs; the largest I had ever seen in point of number, but the smallest with regard to size. They were of the narrow-haunched China breed, greatly extenuated towards the loins and tail, or, as Shakespeare says, with "marvellous thin hams", particularly hog-backed and long-snouted, but they looked clean and healthy, and were destined for the market of the metropolis; in which the consumption of them is very great, as mutton is only used as a dainty, on days of festivity; the sheep being preserved on account of their wool, and the swine being thus obliged to supply their place in the shambles. The aversion which the people feel towards Judaism may, perhaps, have influenced them in this propensity to swine flesh, reversing the proverb of "love me, love my cat"; for,

whilst they dearly loved the pigs, they as cordially abominated the Jews.

On reaching Los Arcos, which is an hacienda within seven leagues of the capital, we came in sight of the three great mountains: they stand in a triangular shape, and from this spot, two of them nearest to us formed the base and the other the apex. We travelled on three leagues farther, and arrived at a small village, after clambering up the side of a long steep hill, which in many countries would be considered a mountain, and stopped to refresh ourselves at a poor hovel. The name of the place is Frayjanes; and I remember nothing more about it than that we lunched and took our *siesta* under a tree before the hut, and that there were a great quantity of dirty children and a few little pigs.

The country began, from this place, to take the appearance of some considerable degree of civilization. Gates and inclosures manifested the division and estimation of

property. As we approached still nearer to the city, we passed some small country villas and gardens, with tracts cultivated with cochineal, and surrounded by small dikes or mud walls. It was about four in the evening, the air was fresh and balmy, the climate resembling a bright English day in the beginning of June. The tract over which we passed was varied with hill and dale: the turf, green and tender, seemed sprouting under our feet as we advanced. In the front, lay the city, with its white domes and spires glittering in the sun, and appearing larger than it really was by the interspersion of the shade and foliage of the fine trees with which it was, on all sides, intersected and environed. On the right, were shaded groves, and cultivated slopes, and knolled hills, rising upon each other in progressive grandeur, till their summits became, as it were, the base of the tender gray streak which marked the distant outline of the Andes;—whilst on the left, the country was a series of table

lands and valleys, formed by wide and bold undulations, and terminating with the three mountains, clad with foliage to their summit, and looking like gigantic warriors upon the pigmy multitudes by which they were surrounded. The sight was so beautiful and replete with interest, that I had stopped behind to enjoy the contemplation of it alone, and at leisure.

As I was taking up my reins to continue my route, I saw a fawn sporting on a rising ground, within ten yards of me. It stamped its foot, advanced, stopped short, frisked, then stopped short again, and stared at me. I had, mechanically, drawn one of my pistols from the holsters, and had cocked it whilst I was witnessing these manœuvres. The little animal, still, stood staring at me; with its large black eyes, innocent and unsuspecting, and its little black glossy nose and chin perked out in impudent defiance. It stamped its foot again, as offering wager of battle, gave another frisk, and darted off.—What a fool

I was, thought I:—why didn't I pull the trigger?—I dashed my spurs into the sides of my little horse, who never wanted that encouragement, and was up with my companions, in a twinkling. He continued fretful and gaysome till we had passed the theatre for bull-fights, about a mile out of the town; but, as we entered it, his spirit, most unaccountably, began to flag, his strength and energy seemed, in a moment, to have left him: neither whip nor spur would keep him in a moderate walk; he staggered down the long street which led to the abode whither we were going, and, as I alighted in the court yard, had hardly strength to resist the effort of my dismounting.—I was sorry for the poor animal, for he had brought me safely to the place of my destination.

The late Mr. Secretary Canning, in his letter of the 3d of January 1825 to Mr. Morier, instructed me, after the signing of the Mexican treaty, to proceed to Guatemala, there to ascertain "The present state

of its political government, and the disposition of the people, its resources, financial, military, commercial, and territorial, the amount of its population, the number and wealth of its towns, its principal means of communication with itself and with the exterior;"—and "that I should draw up a report upon those heads and upon any other points, on which I might be able to obtain information, respecting Guatemala, of interest to his Majesty's Government."—I revolved in my mind the importance of these subjects, at the breakfast which I took with the hospitable family, whose house I had entered, and of whom I shall have occasion to speak more hereafter. I had made inquiries about a house; but, finding that I could not obtain a respectable one, without taking it for a fixed period, and, even then, paying 6,000 dollars as a *traspaso*, (a good will repayable by the next tenant,) in advance, I renounced the idea, and became domiciliated with the family in question. The consul from the

United States of North America, who had arrived two months before me, was not so fortunate as myself: there was not an inn or hotel in the town; he was sitting in the grand Plaza with his baggage, when he was invited to partake of the hospitality of a native merchant, a respectable gentleman of the name of Castro, who saw him in that situation; and I, therefore, concluded I was right in the dispositions I had made. I think it but justice, to say, to the parties who received me, that I was entertained with the greatest hospitality, and had no reason to repent of my resolution.

CHAPTER X.

Interview with the President.—Members of Congress.—The Archbishop.—State of the Church.

THE next morning, the 18th May, I called on Don Marcial Zebadua, who, I understood, was minister for foreign affairs: he has been nearly two years in this country, as minister from the republic. On calling upon him there, I found that he had shortly before resigned in favour of Don Jose de Sosa, to whom he introduced me. We, afterwards, all went together to the president. Whatever I might have anticipated in regard to the attention and favourable consideration of his Excellency, the manner in which he received me was far beyond my most sanguine expectations. My official character was not strictly defineable; I had no credentials; and, although a Commissioner of inquiry, I had not about

me, like the other commissioners to Mexico, the ministerial appointment which they were, individually, to assume when the case required, to support me in my official pretensions: I had no other introduction to the president than that, which I had been able to obtain by my conduct at Mexico. I explained to his Excellency the object and motives of my journey, and the interest I had taken in the affairs of the Central Republic; the information respecting it, which I had, from time to time, transmitted to his Majesty's Government, and the gratification I should feel in being able to report favourably on the present state of its political regeneration. This candour was fully requited on the part of his Excellency. He told me that my zeal in the cause of their independence was as well known at Guatemala as at Mexico; that he had anticipated the probability of my commission for many months before it was made public in that capital; and, after many other observations of a kind and

complimentary nature, observed that, in my future intercourses with him at Guatemala, I should consider him in a double capacity; as president of the republic, and, to use his own expression, "as Juan d'Arze, your friend." I was introduced, the same day, by Mr. Bayley, the agent of the house of Messrs. Barclay and Co., to the Marquess of Ayzenena and some other families of influence and distinction; and, on the following day, went down to the congress, which was sitting. The greater part of the members, were in succession, introduced to me, and Mr. Bayley, who had been a long resident here, had the goodness to point out those who were considered as the most enlightened and competent to afford me assistance in collecting the various points of information to which my official inquiries were directed. I could not help remarking the Englishman-like, well dressed, appearance which many of the members exhibited. One of them, a young man with a broad cloth pelisse particularly well

furred and frogged, seemed much engaged in contemplating my habiliments: they were far from correct. I had on a blue frock dress coat, with canary silk linings, which, I need not add, is, by no means, a morning dress; but I happened to have no other, as all my baggage was swamped and spoilt in landing at Sonsonate. I was glad to escape from the scrutinizing gaze of this comptroller of Guatemalian costume.

In returning, I looked in at the Aduana, or Custom-house, to inquire about my baggage, when Don Nicholas Rivera, the administrator, informed me that a free permit had been already sent down to the office from the minister of *Relations*. The house itself is a large square building with cellars abutting from the inner sides, for the deposit of goods and merchandize. The court-yard was occupied with bales of cochineal, indigo, hides, and other articles of traffic: there was an apparent health and activity in the trade of this little republic, which filled the mind with pleasing anticipations

of its increase, or, as the French would say, its future destiny. The long room, if I may so call it, was occupied only by six clerks, but they were "all actively employed", (as the British Boards of Commissioners in their returns to the Treasury would say,) and there might have been as many more engaged in other parts of the establishment.

In the course of the day, the Padre Castillo, one of the most influential members of the Congress, called upon me in the name of the Archbishop, the Padre Casaus, and delivered to me a polite message inviting me to take up my abode in his palace. I had with me two letters of introduction to His Grace; but, taking the proffer in the usual acceptation of the term, politely declined it. I, however, called the next day, and delivered the letters in person: I discovered that we were, mutually, acquainted with many persons at Mexico, and these were chiefly, I found, amongst the most respectable of the old Spanish fa-

milies, some of whom I used to think rather dubiously of with respect to their attachment to the new systems of these governments. Not being at present acquainted with the political feelings of the Archbishop, and concluding that, under any circumstances, it would be better for me to live free and independent during my stay in the capital, I again refused the pressing offer he made me of the use of his house. This, however, I had some difficulty in effecting, as he assured me, with a good-natured expression of features, (he is a particularly handsome man about fifty,) that he was not asking me in the Spanish meaning, but in truth and sincerity, or words to this effect; and, "come", said he, opening some folding doors, which led into another suite of rooms, "I will shew you your apartments." I walked through them with him; they were handsome and commodious; but I still felt it proper to decline his kindness: though, to say the truth, I had much difficulty in doing so; for never did any one

who offers a civility which, at the same time, he dreads will be accepted, experience greater feelings of embarrassment than I did in rejecting the sincere overtures of this kind and liberal man.

I very soon got acquainted with the history and character of Don Ramon Casaus: he is a person of engaging manners, and vigorous with respect to years and intellect. He informed me that he had thought it his duty, in the first instance, to oppose the measures of the independent party, as being subversive of the principles of the government which he was bound to uphold, and by which his authority was protected; but that, as the march of public opinion gained ground, and when he found it was absolutely the wish of the people at large to have an independent government, he was induced to relax his opposition, and, afterwards, to prevent the bloodshed which must, naturally, have taken place, pending a conflict of such a domestic nature, to give his firm and decided support to the newly establish-

ed government. He was originally a friar, but is now the representative of the secular clergy, and carries, with his opinions, the influence of all the most able ecclesiastics of that denomination. It is not equally certain that all the religious corporations, as such, are so much in favour of the new order of things. I am, indeed, inclined much to doubt it; although they appear contented, speak fairly, and do not venture, by word or act, to exhibit any overt marks of opposition. With respect to the permission for Protestant worship, His Grace gave me to understand that, as far as regarded *private* worship, there could be no objection;—that the Guatemalian constitution was formed as liberally as it could possibly be, under existing circumstances: that the article relating to religion was much more general than that regarding the same subject, as enacted in the constitution of Mexico; for that, in the latter, the words are " Tit. 1. Art. 3. The religion of the Mexican nation is, and shall perpetually

be, the Catholic, Apostolic and Roman: the nation protects it by wise and just laws, *and prohibits the exercise of any other whatsoever*"; whereas, in the Guatemalian constitution, the words are "Tit. 2. Art. 11. Its religion is Catholic, Apostolic and Roman, to the exclusion of the *public* exercise of any other whatsoever."

Although such are the sentiments of the first authority and, perhaps, of most of the consequential members of the hierarchy, it is to be apprehended that any thing like an alarm on the score of divine worship being carried on in a manner dissimilar from that to which the community at large have hitherto been accustomed, might produce very disagreeable effects. It must not be concealed that the people, especially the lower orders of it, are most fastidiously wedded to their forms of worship, and keep up their ceremonies with stricter observance and greater ostentation than, perhaps, the natives of any other countries in the whole of the late Spanish dominions; but

they are, at the same time, of so kind and peaceable a disposition, that nothing but a direct violence to their religious feelings would be likely to excite their opposition; and, hence, amongst the numerous foreigners who had visited the capital, within the last twelve months of my arrival, (more it is supposed than had visited it within the last three centuries,) no one, as I could find, had been questioned or in any way slighted upon the grounds of having professed a faith, the tenets of which might differ from those of the established religion.

I subjoin a few remarks on the state of the church, translated from a short report furnished me by the Canon Castillo; I have every reason to believe it, from collateral evidence, to be worthy of credit.

There are in the republic of Central America 300 parishes, most of which contain from two, three, to four settlements; each parish having its curate, and these one with the other, may be reckoned to re-

ceive an annual stipend of 1,500 dollars, or £300 sterling each. There is at the present time in Guatemala a cathedral, with bishops and canons.

SUFFRAGAN CHURCHES.

In Leon de Nicaragua, a cathedral, bishop, and canons.

In Comayagua, a cathedral, bishop, and canons.

In Ciudad Real, a cathedral, bishop, and canons.

And it is in agitation to erect two others; one in San Salvador, and the other in Costa Rica.

The religious communities are of the orders of Saint Francis, Saint Dominic, (very rich,) Saint Austin, Philip of Neri, Belen, (with an hospital,) Our Lady of Mercy and of the Reform, and of Saint Peter of Alcantara.

These large convents of the capital have smaller ones in the other cities and towns throughout the republic; and the

whole of them may contain together about 300 religious persons. Each convent has a gratuitous school for the instruction of the poor, in reading and writing, arithmetic, and the principles of religion and morality. In some districts, the religious are curates, and are much beloved by the natives, whom they civilize and teach many useful arts besides those of industry and agriculture: they have sufficient influence in affairs relating to the government, and are very orderly citizens. In the capital, there are, at the most, eight convents of nuns; maintaining themselves on their own funds, and having schools for the instruction of girls: they lead a very regular life. The churches in the capital amount to thirty. They are ornamented in a most costly manner; are magnificent in their construction and munificent in maintaining great pomp and splendour in their respective religious functions: it is certain that, in the republic,

the cost of religious worship is equal to twice the expenses of the government. It will be seen by the above account that the clergy are no unimportant branch of the political establishment of Guatemala. There seems to be a very friendly understanding between them and the government, and the same exists amongst themselves, if we except, however, some difficulties that have arisen in the appointment of a bishop of San Salvador. The people of that state, conceiving it necessary to establish a bishoprick, appointed, without the consent of the Archbishop, the father Delgado to that function.

The Archbishop, having denied his sanction, and, in fact, having refused to ordain him, the matter was referred to the ecclesiastical Cabildo, who reported that the appointment was not lawful. The matter having then been discussed by the congress, it was agreed that it should await the decision of the Papal See, through the

medium of the legation sent to that country from Mexico.

The sentiments of the Pope, as they affected the general important question of the independence of these New States, had been very favourable, until the issuing of the Encyclic of the 24th September 1824. We gather from the Bull of 7th September 1822, that Pius VII., addressing the Bishop of Colombia, says—"We are, certainly, very far from wishing to meddle with those subjects appertaining to the political state of the public interest; but regarding only the cause of religion, the things that belong to our ministry, whilst we bitterly deplore the cruel wounds that have been inflicted upon the church in Spain, we are, at the same time, exceedingly anxious to provide for the necessities of the faithful in those regions of America; and we, therefore, pant with the desire of being intimately acquainted with them."—It appears, by a subsequent letter, from Pope Leo XII.,

to the same bishop of Colombia, that he had the same views as his predecessor Pius VII.; and, that, as far as regarded their spiritual affairs, he was ready to treat with the clergy of that republic on the same footing as if they had been still dependent upon Spain. And here the matter rests.

CHAPTER XI.

Family of Doña Vicente.—Festivities at Amatitañ.

SATURDAY, 21st. The family with whom I had taken up my abode, consisted of Doña Vicente Cuellar y Rascon, and her daughter Maria Jesus, the eldest of a large family, and probably about twenty-five years of age. Don José de Padillo, the father of the interesting family at Aguachapa, was living with them. The house was large but not very commodious, and very indifferently furnished; it was hired for the Guatemalian season.

Amongst the little festivities with which the time abounded, was one which was going on at a retired and beautiful hamlet about twenty miles from the city, on the road towards the south sea. All the fashionables were setting off thither to partake of this rural recreation; and, being invited to join the party of my kind hostess,

I mounted my little horse, who had now perfectly recovered, and off we set with the rest of the community. The young lady of our party was mounted on a pony, accompanied by a gentleman on horseback, who was very attentive to her; for, in addition to her personal attractions, she had a large fortune, and had had many offers, which she had hitherto refused: her mother was conveyed in a hammock swung upon a stout pole, borne by four Indians, and four others as relays: another conveyance of the same nature was appropriated to the use of Don José Padillo. Then there were three or four female domestics, mounted either on ponies or mules; and sundry mules loaded with beds, kitchen furniture, boxes with wardrobes, eatables and other necessaries. As many other parties, equally well furnished and provided, were issuing out of the town, at the same time, the appearance was very novel and grotesque. The beautiful and bright serenity of the climate, the loveliness of the

surrounding prospects, the agreeable variety of the route through which we passed, rendered the journey to me highly interesting and amusing.

About eleven o'clock we had reached a hamlet called Villa Nueva, a very poor spot: the chief house was used as a general place of refreshment: it consisted, as usual, of only two rooms, which were both occupied, almost to suffocation. The yard, also, was so crowded, with the mules and baggage of the various parties who had stopped to refresh themselves, that many of the travellers had left it to congregate, more at their ease, under the hedges and trees in the lane in which the inn stood. We strolled up the village and made a call at a large farm-house, looking into the church-yard; where we saw a lady who had been bed-ridden for some months, owing to a bad confinement. I did not understand much about the particular causes of her indisposition, but the poor woman looked dreadfully pale and emaciated, and,

from the sort of encouragement given to her by her medical attendants, there was but little chance of her recovery. Who those attendants were I cannot guess, but I fear the practice of medicine and surgery is at a very low ebb, no less in the capital than in every other part of the country. Having taken our lunch, (a very good one by the bye,) in the viranda, in front of the house, it was necessary to lie down and take our *siestas*. Doña Vicente and Don José preferred their hammocks, which were slung in the viranda, and, as there were two beds in the further room, they were occupied by the young lady and myself.

As we approached the village of Amatitañ, the country became more and more interesting. From the summit of a lofty eminence, which our animals had gained with laborious exertion, the prospects which opened before us were enchanting and terrific, like the charms of some beautiful female maniac. On our right, were the moun-

tains rising abruptly from the deep imbedded valleys at their base: here there were copses hanging over craggy ravines, whose abysses appeared bottomless, as hid from our inquiring gaze: and there, plots of ground delicately cultivated, and smiling with the harvest. On the left, I was still more struck with the appearances which the prospect presented to our observation. It was as if, in the midst of her happiest efforts, Nature had fitfully thrown up her task, prodigally wasteful of materials so choice and abundant.

Amatitañ, the village to which we were going, was situated amidst forests of trees of the most exhilarating verdure. Its red tiled houses, awakening the ideas of peaceful domesticity and social comfort, heightened the refreshing effect of the scene. Above the whole, a lofty woody mountain flung its partial shade over the fair face of the lake which reposed at its feet. The descent of the wood seemed difficult, and would have appeared impossible, but from

the reflection that the journey down it was practicable, because it had often been made. As we descended, we came closer and closer to the object we were pursuing, and, different from most other objects of human pursuit, we found, that, when attained, the more interesting it proved. At the bottom of the hill, is a kind of waiting house or house of call for those who are going up, or coming down, this appalling precipice. Those who are going up do right to recruit themselves with something to enable them to undertake the difficulties of it, and those who have undergone the perils of the descent deserve some recompense for their trouble.

We entered the village about six o'clock in the evening, and took possession of a house which had been left, I cannot say, prepared, for our reception. It consisted, of course, but of two rooms; one of which was about twenty feet long, nearly three fourths of the length of the building, and the other, running in a right angle at

the end, about fifteen feet long and eight wide. The latter apartment communicated with the large one by an open door-way, and formed the left wing or extremity of the house. Behind it were four or five cottages, thickly inhabited with men, women, and children. I wondered, as their huts consisted of only one room and a kitchen, where they could all sleep; but the way in which we managed, quickly solved that difficulty. Eating, drinking, and sleeping, they say, are amongst the non-naturals of life: but they were here performed in the most simple, and, therefore, the most natural, way that I could possibly have contemplated. Five gentlemen's beds were made up in the room in which I slept, besides three ladies' beds in the room adjoining, not to mention the female attendants, who slept on the floor of the latter apartment.

The dinner table was furnished with a profusion of luxuries: great sobriety was observed by the gentlemen: two or three glasses

of wine was all they drank; but before the cloth was removed, they applied themselves to the comfort of the cigar: a glutton might have said, like the apostrophiser in the old play, "All our joys end in smoke," but with my companions it was in the words of the poet, "Never ending, still beginning;" and we had not finished our recreation, before we were summoned, by a special invitation, to a ball. I was a little startled at the proposal, for I had no dress fit for the purpose, and had nothing on but a Cashmire shawl jacket, worked with frogs and lace, according to the Mexican costume, and white waistcoat and trowsers: and I doubted whether my Chinese, who was a great enemy to redundancy in apparel, had put me up, what the tailors term, a "dress frock coat." But my speculations were defeated, upon the first expression of my doubts, as to the propriety of my apparel: I was assured that it was a party, sans ceremonie, and, without ordering the carriage, for the distance was not a hundred yards

from the house, we all set off, on foot, to the place of entertainment. The music had drawn to the door of the house in which the ball was held all the idle stragglers and holiday company of the place: we had much difficulty in obtaining an entrance: there were three rows of benches placed round the walls of the three sides of the apartment, and at the end were tables of refreshment, consisting of fruit, cakes, wine, and eau de vie.

If I was struck with the homeliness of the place in which these revels were going on, I was much more so with the bevy of beautiful women with which the apartment was tenanted. I had seen the richest and most superb assemblies which Mexico could boast, but, here, appeared before me, at one view, as it were, selections of all the handsomest I had before seen in that metropolis. It is true, I had previously heard from the Mexican ladies of the beauty of the Guatemalians; but, whilst I was endeavouring to account, philosophically,

for the superiority of the latter, suggesting to my imagination the effects of a moister atmosphere, and a table land six thousand feet lower than that of the valley of Mexico, and some such other propositions as an old author says ought "duly to be inquired into for the forming of a well proportioned, *righte*, judgement thereupon;"—I was asked if I should like to dance. There were nothing danced but waltzes, and I must say they were performed with great delicacy and elegance. The figures and attitudes were even more varied and multiplied than I had seen them at Mexico: there were present some of the noblest families of the place, and two or three of those of the ministry;—so that I set the meeting down as *a Transatlantic branch-Almacks.*

I had the honour of being introduced to Don José de Beteta, minister of finance: he was, here, fulfilling the part of a looker on, a character more necessary in a ball-room than the world gives them

credit for; for, crowding, as they are accustomed to do, about the outer ranks of the dancers, they serve as a screen to the blunders of the awkward and diffident, and excite, by their notice, the exertions of those who dance for applause, in the ill-dissembled confidence of their pretensions:—neither pretensions nor confidence were wanting on the present occasion. The music consisted of eight guitars, played with wonderful effect: for the musicians took different parts, and seemed, occasionally, almost to forget they were playing the same tune; so strongly marked were the variations of each performer: but the effect was delightful, and the precision with which they kept their time, considering how they were travelling away from each other, very remarkable,—comparable, indeed, with nothing but the harmonious system of our English mail-coach guards; who, with their patent locked time-keepers, all travel different ways, yet come home, to the instant, without regarding their respective *bars*, whether they be those of

their *leaders* or those which they, *separately, have to pass.*

The scene was now all lively and exhilarating: about thirty couple, as many as the room would conveniently accommodate, were moving in graceful circles around it, impelled according to, what Newton calls, though he was a philosopher, and knew nothing about waltzing, "the ratio of their centrifugal forces and the respective influence of their attractions." The door leading into the street was crowded by a motley group of the holiday company, who had sufficient curiosity to witness the proceedings of their betters, but too much modesty or diffidence to follow their example. Two or three of the front rows of this "observant class of the community" as Washington Irving has it, were squatted down in front of the door, forming a semi-circle before it; behind them were children, who could just peep over their heads; next to them, some children of a larger growth, and, behind them, standing on tiptoe, some of a larger still: the scanti-

ness of their dress, and their exposure to the ungenial blast, as it rushed through the aperture, to equalize the temperature of the heated apartment, reminded me of a botanical show of Flemish flowers, in the month of March;—where few of them survive the exhibition; and it appeared to me that this innocent assemblage, who were caught by curiosity, would be indemnified by catching something in return, if it was only—a cold. I fell into conversation with Don Jose de Beteta: he was (for I regret to say he is since dead) a man of unimpeachable character for integrity; his abilities, though not of the first order, were respectable and adequate to the discharge of his official duties: he promised to draw up for me a report on the state of their revenue and finance, and I took the liberty of suggesting a few points with respect to the plan and contents of the proposed documents. My attention was occupied the rest of the evening by the dancers. All was over by eleven, and, in the course of half

an hour after, a dead silence pervaded the whole village of Amatitañ. Just as I was dropping to sleep, I heard the sound of music, at a distance: at first, it seemed but the vibrations of harmony which the ear carries away with it from a ball, and which, like other doubtful-gotten property, is often very troublesome: it presently became more distinct, and, at last, stopped before our house, where it continued to play for an hour. It consisted of two guitars and a violin; and, by the peculiarity of some of the notes, I concluded it was executed by gentlemen-performers. This proved to be the case: they were serenading the black-eyed, amiable, little daughter of our hostess, whom I could, now, hear bustling about in her apartment, and acknowledging the compliment, which was paid to her, by a short parley held between her and her Lotharios through the iron-barred lattice of her balcony window.

CHAPTER XII.

Festivities continued.—Return to the Capital.

SUNDAY, 22d May. It was, this day month, that I had left San Cosme: I had, certainly, seen, in that short period, a great deal to entertain and surprise me: I understood that I had made the journey to the coast with unusual quickness, and people could scarcely believe it possible that I should find myself safely arrived in the heart of their country, within so short an interval; but it is the misfortune of travellers, in these parts, to be obliged to wait for conveyance: it is an unusual thing to be picked up by a British frigate, the moment you reach the shore, to convey you to the place of destination. I said it was Sunday morning: by five o'clock, the bells were going for church. I rose early, and

found the Plaza crowded with people, flocking from all parts to attend their religious duties: the church, which is large and commodious, and may contain with ease from 400 to 500 people, was, successively, filled by different congregations, until eleven o'clock, when the doors were closed: the Plaza was, now, turned into a complete fair: stalls and booths had been erected in all parts of it; and, on them, were partially displayed, as if by accident, the various goods which the shop-keepers from the capital had come hither to dispose of. Parties of them were cooking their dinners, in gipsy fashion, under the large tree, which, of course, occupied the centre of the square: others were strolling about the beautiful umbrageous lanes which diverged on all sides; or sitting, in merry groups, in the window seats and door-ways of their scanty dwellings.—There was an appearance of life and business, though, in fact, there was nothing doing; so that it was all bustle and vacuity like a bee in an empty bottle.

We dined at one, and had scarcely finished our repast, when the street became, all of a sudden, thronged with people: there was a cock-fight going on in a temporary theatre, which had been erected nearly opposite our house. I paid a trifle for entrance, and had the pleasure of finding myself seated in the dress boxes, amongst some of my fair partners of the preceding evening: great order and decorum were observed, and, with the exception of a little difference of opinion between some parties, in the back benches, as to the construction and adjudication of their bets, but which, although they were by no means frequent, might have puzzled "the Board of Claims," the performance passed off with great approbation and éclat. The birds were well matched, and their condition would have satisfied the learned and critical discernment of Columella himself. I could never witness the feats of these pugnacious creatures, without feelings of respect for them: there is a tribute due to innate bravery,

which no one can help feeling, whatever may be the moral propensities of the animal who possesses it: it is true, the bird, of which we speak, is a polygamist; but, then, as the words have it, "he is a kind husband and a tender parent." "His tenderness," (says Aristophanes,) "towards his brood is such, that, contrary to the custom of many other males, he will scratch and provide for them with an assiduity almost equal to that of the hen; and his generosity is so great, that, on finding a hoard of meat, he will chuckle the hens together, and, without touching one bit himself, will relinquish the whole of it to them!" He seems, however, on the other hand, to be the physical instrument, in the menagerie of nature, to establish and sanction the power of might over right; a recommendation of very doubtful quality, were it not supported by the same author, who compares him, in consequence, to the King of Persia; and, by the observation of Pliny, who says, "*imperitant suo generi, et*

regnum, in quacunque sunt domo, *exercent*." The spectacle was scarcely concluded, before "*the rainy season began.*"

During the whole of my journey, I had scarcely experienced one drop of wet; and, now, the rain poured down in such torrents, that I could hardly cross the way without being nearly drenched. There was no carriage or conveyance in the place, and, hardly, an umbrella, which was a great oversight, as the inhabitants ought to have learnt, without any almanack to tell them, to "expect much rain about this time." Indeed, the regularity and precision, with which these showers fall, when they once begin for the season, are so great, that, by the assistance of a tolerable watch, and a good horse, you may always escape them. The present tornado, unexpected as it was, seemed very little to disarrange or inconvenience the party assembled: some walked quietly through it, whilst others laughed and chatted in the passage and door-way of the house, as if prudently, though inconsiderately,

waiting for its abatement: the inanimate part of creation was differently affected: the parched ground bubbled and sputtered like a drunken toper; the lanky banana crouched down and riggled like an invalid in a shower bath; and the red tiles were deserting their ranks one by one, like bad soldiers, leaving the way open to the enemy. Whilst the squall was at its height, I saw two horsemen come dashing up the street, at full speed: they stopt at the door of the cock-pit: they were each covered with a large mantle; and, without alighting, had caught up, in their arms, a damsel, a-piece, who adjusted themselves, with wonderful activity, on the pommels of the saddles: it was still raining profusely, but the mantles were thrown round the young ladies with such skill, and so completely enveloped them with their gallant knights, who darted off again, at a gallop, that I concluded they must have reached their homes in an instant, and probably without much inconvenience. The gentlemen when

they had set down, returned to take up, in the same manner, till the whole of the party was thus disposed of, or had found other means of reaching their respective abodes. There was something both romantic and classical in the sight: every body has heard of the knights of old carrying off their inamoratas, and of the Romans stealing away their Sabine wives; but few can have an idea of the grace and facility with which the operation may be performed, who has not witnessed the above specimen of Guatemalian horsemanship.

The Lake of Amatitañ is a fine expanse of water, extending about three leagues in length, and a league in breadth: the extremity of it, farthest from the town, loses itself round the lofty mountain, which also bears the name of the place: the left side is closed in by sloping hills, topped by lofty sierras; so that the shore is only accessible on the right, along which there is an indifferent road, but highly picturesque and beautiful, as being

flanked by high shady groves and stupendous ravines. The mountain is volcanic, and the lake and phænomena of the surrounding land shew, incontestably, that the whole scene, as presented to our view, has been the effect of some irruption. When that event took place no one pretends to know: the lake is very ancient, and the inhabitants believe that the Indians, on the arrival of the Spaniards, threw into it all their riches. This is so hackneyed a story, in all parts of the South American dominions, that it is hardly worth mentioning, but to be refuted or discredited; but what I could ascertain from the Indians themselves is, that they have a tradition to that effect, to which they give full credit; they admit that some trifling attempts have been made to raise the wealth supposed to be submerged, but always, hitherto, without effect. The lake is fathomless at fifty yards from the nether end of the shore; every body seemed to be agreed in this; and, as the Indians will have it that the

riches were thrown in between this immeasurable depth and the land, the probability is that they have, long since, been washed down into the abyss. They all agree, nevertheless, that, not many years ago, their grappling apparatus came in contact with a large jar which they endeavoured, in vain, to raise, as the tackle gave way, and as it has done more than once since, when they have had the good fortune to light upon it.

Close to the lake, nearest the town, is a hot spring: as we were walking by it, we saw three or four women bathing, and a number of young children crying and steaming on the banks as if they had been parboiled. The waters are considered very salutary, particularly in cutaneous disorders, but the women bathe chiefly to promote fecundity: these poor creatures are as anxious to have a family, as many Europeans of the lower and poorer classes, in Liverpool and Manchester, are glad to be without one. They are excessively fond of their children, and seem to think they can

hardly have too many of them. This hot spring is equally useful to assist parturition, and it is not unusual to see the mother walking home with her infant after having had recourse to the obstetric assistance of its waters. The cold bath of the adjoining lake and of a clear rapid river, which flows into it, are also very generally used both by the inhabitants and the visitors. About twelve o'clock, on passing the banks of the latter, it seemed as if the whole population of the place had agreed to take a bath together. The better classes availed themselves of the bathing houses, and other protections which decency suggests; but the whole scene was shamefully at variance with its dictates.

The bathing houses alluded to are small wooden buildings erected on the sides of the river, by the more opulent part of the community, for times of recreation, similar to the present: they consist of one square or octagonal sitting room, with windows, unglazed, looking out in every direction: as they are raised on pillars, over the water,

a temporary slight covering hung round the lower part of them, affords, at once, a fresh and convenient bath. The water is very rapid and clear, and well stocked with fish: those of the lake are particularly plentiful and well flavoured: there is one species, like a tench, which is most prized, but, as there are few persons who will take the trouble to catch them, they are by no means cheap. I saw but two small boats on the whole of the lake, and I question whether either of them had ever ventured so far as to round the mountain: in fact, there was nobody that could tell me whether the water ended there, abruptly, whether it narrowed into a creek, or whether, or no, it ended there at all. "Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof," is the axiom by which the South American Indian directs his life: he is a sort of animated vegetation that requires nothing for its support but what the terraqueous globe, in its spontaneous liberality, affords: some maize, some Chili-pepper and the pure

spring are all the meat and drink he wishes for. It is well known that the *Agave*, which produces the drink called Pulque, is very fastidious as to the places in which it thrives. I had not tasted or seen any of this beverage since my second day's journey out of the capital of Mexico: it is a drink so universally approved of by the Indians, that it is hardly possible to conceive that they would not go to the trouble of cultivating the plant, if it would grow; and, yet, as I did not meet with it in many spots which appeared as congenial to its cultivation as Amatitañ, it can be only inferred that laziness is the cause why so great a portion of those countries is deprived of that exhilarating and wholesome substitute for water, or, as some think, for wine.

Every evening, during these holidays, there were balls, monte-tables, (a sort of game of odd and even,) and other pastimes to make life slide lightly away: the festivities finished with the evening of Tuesday: the place was

all in bustle, making ready for departure: here, some unsold goods were ticketed, as tempting bargains, and, there, were others forced upon the market, by petty auctions. The young people seemed inclined, also, to make the most of their time: their gaiety and good humour were still abundant, and more than they had time to dispose of. However, by six o'clock the next morning, they were all on their return to the capital. As the roads, from without ten miles of it, are, in most places, perfectly impassable for carriages, the whole party were on mules or on horseback, and, as they were accompanied with their retinues of servants of every description, with all their requisite utensils and articles of furniture, even to their beds, they formed, as winding up the wild passes of the mountain, or scattered over the verdant plains, a spectacle highly picturesque and amusing. All the families were, of course, acquainted with each other: every one seemed to know every thing about every body's affairs. According to the cus-

tom of the Spaniards, they addressed one another by their Christian names: the servants of one family were riding by the side of, and were in converse with, the gentry of another; whilst the servants of the latter were admitted to the same familiarity with the representatives of the former:—when Jacob had embraced his brother Laban, and veered off to the land of his fathers, he was not accompanied by a more patriarchal-like community than that which was now journeying towards the plains of San Juan.

We had come to a narrow defile in the mountain, where there was room for only one passenger to pass, abreast: the sides of it were composed of high walls of clay which the rain had made smooth and slippery: I was bringing up the rear of the caravan, when my progress was arrested, in the middle of this awkward spot: a mule had slipped down, and would not, or at least the damsel, whom it had carried, could not prevail upon him to, get up. She had slid off his back, uninjured, but

her *Benjamin* which was of very fine cloth, and richly embroidered with lace, had not fared so well: it was shockingly besmeared with dirt, and her little black riding hat, which had come in contact with the bank, as, in endeavouring to gain her footing, she had slipped up against it, was very much disfigured, being, now, fawn-coloured on one side and black on the other, having a very harlequinade shape and appearance. However little disposed a man may be for acts of gallantry, there are some cases in which he cannot help himself; this was clearly one of them. I dismounted, twisted the mule's tail, vociferated a word which I do not approve, (I do not mean to say it was swearing,) but which I had observed the muleteers used on such occasions, with infallible effect, and up the creature jumped, in an instant. The damsel was re-seated, and we proceeded after the rest of the travellers, who had, now, got far a-head of us.

My companion was a slight, delicately

formed, girl, something of a creole, but showing more of Indian caste than any other; about eighteen years of age: she was very chatty, and communicated many anecdotes of the different families who had been present at the revels: she told me of all the matches which were on the tapis, and hinted at some little pieces of scandal which it would be ungenerous and unnecessary for me to put down: she reminded me, as we jogged along, of a pretty, ambling paragraph of "The Morning Post," which nobody would like to be seen looking at, but which every body would like to see. What she was I knew not, but found that, although not a lady, she was a lady's maid,—a personage who is generally, and as it proved to be in this case, a *finer* lady than her mistress; she was servant to the amiable little daughter of Doña Vicente, the lady of whose hospitality I was partaking. The girl had now, it seemed, a lawful right to my protection; and I, therefore, hastened on to join the family; but as

we quickened our pace, I heard a scream; and, looking round, saw the poor creature in a most alarming situation: the girths of her saddle had given way, being so predisposed to do, perhaps, by the late effects of the fall, which had snapped, but not entirely broken, them asunder: such, however, was now the fact, and the saddle, being deprived, as a counsel would say, of its special retainers, was going upon a circuit very prejudicial to the interest and safety of the plaintiff in the case, and whose *suit* had, already, suffered so much by false colouring as well as by bar of process. I slackened my pace as quickly as I could; just in time to save her from falling: she fell, however, upon my off shoulder; and, in this position, with her arms about my neck, we continued our fearful course for some minutes. I might, perhaps, have checked my horse, but her mule had taken a fancy to gallop, as if determined to make up for the time we had lost. What to determine upon, myself, I did not know: to

stop was dangerous,—to leave her was impossible: what was a man to do?—She was now relying upon me rather than her saddle; and it was fortunate that she did so, for this gave way, whilst I, constitutionally, kept my post, like an Envoy Extraordinary, with a troublesome attachée. With my right arm, I supported the poor girl who had swooned with fright, though I switched and jerked with my left, with a spirit of apprehension unknown to a Melton Mowbryan. All would not do: away we went, but whither we were going I could not contemplate: I had, however, some confused ideas of the Knights of Romance and the Rape of the Sabines, and had time to conclude that the equestrianism I had witnessed at Amatitañ was a fool to mine, and that Astley would have given a fee simple of his establishment for the picture we exhibited. After a precipitous run, for some seconds, my horse, fortunately, became so entangled with the underwood of the forest, that he could proceed no farther: I loosened my

hold of my troublesome charge, dismounted, fastened the bridle to a branch of one of the trees, and began to consider what was best to be done: to call for assistance was useless, for no one was within sight or hearing. Recollecting, however, that I generally travelled with a small flasket of brandy in the pocket of my *armas de agua*, I searched for it, and, luckily, found a small portion left in the bottle, which I immediately applied to the temples and also to the mouth of my patient, and soon succeeded in restoring her to a perfect state of sensibility: after some difficulty, she was remounted in the saddle before me, and, having regained the road, we came up, at length, with our party; who were stopping to take their lunch and *siesta* in a substantial-looking building, which stood in a solitary situation, in the midst of a large plain.

As it was a convenient resting-place, a sort of half-way house, every portion of it was occupied by the travellers: it con-

sisted of two small rooms, one a kitchen, the other a bed-room, with a viranda runing the whole length of the front, and edged with a wall of about two feet in height, on which some of the party were sitting. I thought they seemed to stare at us, as we came up, for they stopped smoking, and knocked the ashes from their cigars: others were smoking *ad libitum* as they lay stretched along their temporary couches on the floor, or were eating or drinking, or sleeping or lounging, according to the most approved systems of the midday recreation appointed and provided for the sojourners in all tropical climates.

CHAPTER XIII.

State of Parties.—Members of Senate.—Business with the President.—Corpus Christi.—Junction of the Oceans by the Lake of Nicaragua.

FRIDAY, 27th May. Having arrived, the day previous, at the capital, without further accident or inconvenience, I, this morning, called upon Don José de Valle, a person of great consideration on account of his learning and talents. The election to the presidency had lain between him and the actual president, Don Manuel Arze. The election is carried by a majority of popular votes, which must amount to forty-two, collected by electoral colleges, each representing 15,000 souls. As was natural to suppose, in a business of this nature, much interest and some manœuvring had been exerted. Valle was supposed to be the popular favourite, and, in fact, when the election took place, he counted forty-one votes,

wanting only one to establish the actual majority required: Arze could count only thirty-four votes: as neither of them had the majority established by the Congress, the election fell upon that body, and the result was that the oligarchical preference was given to Arze, who was elected by seventeen votes against six.

The two candidates were both known to possess the highest degree of patriotic feeling, and they have both suffered extreme hardships and privations in the cause of their country. Valle is, by profession, a civilian, is passionately addicted to literature, and is a great patron of science: Arze is a soldier, having been one of the chief promoters of the Independence, as far back as the year 1811. He was the chief of San Salvador when that province so strenuously resisted the tyranny of Iturbide, and prevented, by force of arms, the violent union which the then emperor desired to effect between the two kingdoms of Mexico and Guatemala. He is of a mild,

calculating nature, of a clear, penetrating genius, and is esteemed and respected even by those who differ from him in politics. These two exalted characters were, now, living on a friendly footing: in one point, they were intimately connected; they seemed anxious to outstrip each other in promoting the interests of their country: they were equally assiduous in furnishing me with every information which I was seeking to collect. M. De Soza, the present minister for foreign and interior relations, is also a person of very considerable talent, and I owe him many obligations for the assistance he afforded me.

Valle had thrice refused the vice-presidency, when Don Manuel Beltranena, formerly a member of the constituent assembly, was unanimously elected. The salary assigned to the president is 10,000 dollars per annum, to the vice-president 4,000 dollars, the senators 2,000 each, and the deputies of the Congress 1,200.

The members of the High Court of Jus-

tice were Tomas O'Horan, President, and lately one of the triumvirate composing the Supreme Executive Power;—Don Marcial Zebadua, late Minister of State, and now Envoy Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to Great Britain; Antonio Riveras Cavezas, a deacon; Justo Herrera; and Alexandro Diaz Cabeza de Vaca, a fiscal.—The members of the Senate were Don Mariano Beltranena, President, and Vice-President of the Republic; Isidro Mendez; Juan Estevan Milla; Jose Geronimo Zelaya; Alcayazu, ecclesiastic; Barrundia, politically opposed to the president; Mendez, ecclesiastic; Alvarado, ecclesiastic, and Hernandez.—A list of the Deputies of the Congress will be found in the Appendix. In tracing the future history and destiny of this republic it will be a document which may be referred to with interest and satisfaction. What would some antiquarian bibliomanist not give for a catalogue of the pristine statesmen who "gave Rome's little senate laws"?

1st June. I, this morning, repeated my visit to the President: I explained to him, on this occasion, more fully the object of my visit: I told him that I wished to be able to lay before his Majesty's Government complete statements of the finance, the commerce, and the military resources of Guatemala; and, agreeably to this view, he was so obliging as to promise me that he would require those documents to be made out and furnished me by the proper departments.

The next day, the town was all in a bustle, to celebrate the grand procession of Corpus Christi. All the houses were thrown open; garlands of ribands and flowers were streaming from the windows or suspended across the streets: at four different stations, each of them at the farthest angle from the centre of the town, were erected temporary altars, ornamented with cut glass, looking-glasses, large silver salvers, together with other articles of gold and silver, and in short every species of

wealth and finery that the inhabitants possessed. The principal families who live near the particular station, undertake, by turns, the fitting up of these altars; but it is customary for every one to contribute something towards their ornament: during the procession, in particular, these temporary altars are illuminated with a profusion of wax candles: the same are also kept burning on them for a day or two previous, and it is usual to see the young ladies of the family occupied in the office of trimming them, and in fact, taking charge of the whole arrangement.

In all the several ceremonies, both in and out of the church, the civil authoritie were much employed:—church and state were intimately blended. The President was conveyed to and from the cathedral in a state carriage, drawn by four mules; two young lads of family, Zaravia and Aguirre, acting as postillions. In the procession, there were included all the religious orders of the place: of the order of Carmen,

there were forty monks, of our Lady of Mercy thirty, Franciscans forty, Dominicans thirty, Recollects fifty, Collegians thirty; in all about 220; these were followed by 400 soldiers and fifty or sixty other persons, who also formed part of the procession.

I was invited into the house of the Marquess of Ayzenena: the large rooms looking into the street were full of company; the windows were all open and the ladies were disposed in groups on the window-seats; and their mothers, many of whom were indisposed by colds, which they were thus increasing, were seated in chairs behind them. As the Host passed, the whole company knelt down, and after a minute's silence and recollection, the buzz of mirth and business again filled the apartment. On one of the pier tables, was a representation in wax-work of the shepherds coming to adore our Saviour: the rooms of all the houses, from the first to the lowest class, are so filled with these images and repre-

sentations, that I should not have mentioned this circumstance, in particular, had not my attention been arrested by some beads on the neck of one of the shepherds, which looked like pearls, but which I thought, of course, could not be so, from their extraordinary size: I found, however, that I was mistaken. I had hardly supposed it possible that such enormous pearls existed; and, wishing to ascertain their value, I guessed them at ten thousand pounds: the Marquess, I understood, had given more for them: the necklace consisted of twenty-one pearls, the centre one being in the shape of, and as large as, a pigeon's egg, and the others large in proportion, but round and decreasing in size, gradually, towards each end.

In the evening I went to a *tertulla* at Señor Castro's *: his little daughter played and sung prettily; but her piano, which, by the bye, seemed to be greatly prized,

* The gentleman who so hospitably received the American Consul.

was very old and indifferent, although it was marked, " New Patent, by Astor, 79, Cornhill."

3d June. I was introduced to-day by Mr. Bayley, the agent of Messrs. Barclay and Co., to the Padre Dighero, deputy for Antigua or ancient city of Guatemala: he was a canon of Guatemala Vieja, and known to be a man of great scientific research, and, amongst other articles of valuable information, he gave me a sketch of a road which it was proposed to form between the city of Santiago and the South Sea; the distance being about eighty-six miles. I understood from Mr. Bayley that the plan was likely to be carried into effect, by a company about to be formed by the house he represented: he also told me that there was every probability that the same firm would get the privilege of opening a water communication between the two seas at the lake of Nicaragua. Although the carrying into effect of the latter object might, in some degree, annul the

utility of the former, yet I was glad to find they were likely to take effect at all, and, chiefly, that they would be carried into execution by British energy and British capital. The unfortunate money crisis, it is well remembered, put a stop to these plans, and has nearly paralysed every other scheme of advantage or emolument in South America:—good or bad, they have all been condemned alike: men lost the faculty of reasoning, so great was their terror; and, in proportion as the tide of public opinion ran strong and buoyant in favour of those speculations, so it, all at once, ebbed down into a state of stagnant imbecility.

In the mean time, I lament to say, that as far as regards the country of which I am writing, its importance, however overlooked by British capitalists, has attracted the serious attention of other European nations. His majesty the King of the Netherlands, with a view of patronising and extending a commercial intercourse with it, has subscribed half a million of guilders

for the formation of a Joint Stock Company: the capital consists of a million, so that his Majesty is proprietor of half of the concern:—we need not question that it will enjoy the royal encouragement or that of his ministers. It is to be hoped, however, that the Dutch will not exact the exclusive privilege of the passage; but that it will become open to all nations; although they might reasonably expect to derive some specific advantages on account of transit dues, for having carried the plan into execution.

For the satisfaction of those who may yet feel an interest in this undertaking, although the object can, now, no longer be of any, very particular, consequence to ourselves, I subjoin a few observations, which, after the most diligent inquiries of parties best calculated to give me good information on the subject, I was able to collect. Without adverting to even some general remarks on the feasibility of establishing a water-communication between the Atlantic and

the Pacific, by enumerating the points whereby such plan is presumed capable of being effected*, I shall, here, confine myself to the proceedings which have been adopted by individuals of different countries, and by the Guatemalian government, for carrying into execution the desired object, at the point in question.

It is an important feature in the history of this republic, that she has been the first and, indeed, the only one of them all that has taken any decided steps in the matter. Most writers have considered the river San Juan as one of the most advantageous, as well as most likely, points for establishing the communication alluded to: the Guatemalian government have, naturally, been no less impressed with that opinion; and the following particulars will shew in what manner they have met the propositions which have been made to them, as well as

* These points are suggested, and their respective feasibilities explained, in my Dictionary of America and West Indies, Vol. III, p. 207.

the specific objects which they entertain in carrying the plan into execution.

There were, at this time, two companies formed in England for the general purposes of effecting, by steam-navigation or otherwise, a water-communication between the two oceans; but the only proposals that had been made to the government by British merchants were proffered by the respectable firm which I have above mentioned. The purport of those proposals, bearing date the 18th September, 1824, was to form a navigable communication by means of the lake of Nicaragua and the river San Juan, without any expense to the government, provided the latter would give the projectors every necessary assistance. On the 2d of February, 1825, other propositions were made to the government by some merchants of the United States of North America, and signed by Colonel Charles Bourke and Mr. Mathew Llanos. They observe, that "on the strength of statements, which manifested the practica-

bility of the enterprise, they proceeded to New York, in the month of March, 1824, for the purpose of forming a company for defraying the expenses of such a work; that, having formed the company, which consisted of some of the strongest [that was their expression] houses of the northern federation, they returned to the Central Republic with an armed brig; on board of which they brought engineers to level the grounds and survey the lake of Nicaragua and St. John's river." The letter continues, "We, having dispatched the said brig to her destination, at the end of last December, and being now about to proceed by land in order to examine the local situations of the territory, pray this government, in consideration of the advances already made, and the advantageous nature of the subjoined propositions (than which, we believe, none more favourable can be offered to this republic) to secure to us their realization, by granting the exclusive privileges which we solicit." The terms proposed to

give to the government, for the exclusive privilege of navigation, twenty per cent. on the annual product of the toll to be paid by vessels passing through the canal, and after the expiration of the term [the period is not mentioned] the canal to become the exclusive property of the government. The projectors required to have, " 1st. An exclusive privilege for the purpose. 2d. An exclusive privilege for navigation by steamboats on the rivers, and on the waters of the three provinces, as far as the lake where the said canal is to be opened. 3rd. Permission to cut wood in the said province. 4th. Exemption from duty on the introduction of goods, on account of the company, until the canal be completed."

Of the above propositions, on the part of Messrs. Barclay and Co., and of the merchants of the United States, no specific notice appears to have been taken; but, on the 16th June, 1825, the Congress passed a decree which obtained the approbation of the Senate on the 11th July, and was con-

firmed by the Executive on the 12th of that month,—which promises the sanction and assistance of the state to any parties who would undertake the project, and to recognize, as a public debt, the money expended in the execution of it; the passage dues to be applied to paying off the capital sunk in its opening, and to satisfying the interest thereon, deducting, first, the expenses which the repairs of the said canal shall require, the costs of collecting the dues, and of a garrison for its defence; the navigation to be free to all nations, friendly or neutral, without any privilege or exclusion.

On the 1st August, 1825, the Executive extended the time for receiving proposals to six months longer. The consequence has been that the Dutch, as I have before stated, stepped in and possessed themselves of the undertaking. When I left the republic, I felt assured that it would have been carried into execution by the British, and I cannot suppress my mortification that fo-

reigners should have the exclusive honour, to say nothing of the advantage, of so great an enterprise;—for it is one which can be but *once* effected amidst the noble achievements of eventful time.

CHAPTER XIV.

Description of the Country about the Lake of Nicaragua.—Convent of San Francisco.—Don José de Valle.—The Mint.—Mines.

I COLLECTED four charts respecting the lake of Nicaragua and the river San Juan. Two of these were, I discovered, very incorrect, but one of them gave the best plan of the port of San Juan, whilst the other afforded the most correct notion of the settlements and territory on the western side of the lake: a third, which was copied by permission of the government from an original in the congress, was, in a general point of view, that which can best be depended on*. I obtained also a table of the levels taken between the western side of the lake and the South Sea, which sets at rest the question as to the respective

* The Map in the title-page has been formed upon these data.

heights of the bodies of water which it is wished to communicate *. It shews that the lake is forty-four yards, Spanish, and a fraction, above the level of the South Sea.

That the San Juan is navigable from the port to the interior of the lake for craft drawing three or four feet water, at all times of the year, there can be no reason to doubt. It also appears clear that it can be ascended in two or three days more than is occupied in descending it. For thirty to thirty-five leagues up, it is navigable for vessels, drawing from ten to twelve feet water. It is near the fort of San Juan that the difficulties arise, on account of the cataracts, and here it is that the skill of the Dutch engineer may be exercised in making collateral cuts or canals to provide the depth of water, at all seasons, that may be required for the regular navigation: in the lake itself, there is depth of water for vessels of any class. In the map will be seen the exact spot where it was intended to

* See this Table in the Appendix.

open the communication with the South Sea. This is not by the lake of Leon, but on the south-western side of the lake of Nicaragua, where the country is level and admirably adapted for the purpose. The reader will not have forgotten my travelling companion Don Simon: he was a native of this part, and as my stay in the country did not allow me to visit it, I was happy in being able to collect from him much information concerning it.

The city of Realejo, when the chart was taken, contained about 500 houses: it does not now contain, at the most, more than 120, and is no city. It is said that, at the back of that town, the Spaniards used to build vessels of 400 tons: however this might have been the case, once, it is certain that they cannot now build vessels there, to any advantage, of more than 70 or 80 tons, as there is not depth of water to bring them down to the Xaguey or great port where the large vessels lie: but about three miles farther down, is a place called the Vaca Bor-

racha, where vessels drawing twelve feet water can lie, making fast to the trees on both sides. The tide rises twelve feet up at the town; and docks could be made there for good sized vessels; but the difficulty would be to get them down to the Xaguey: I procured a plan and description of the port.

The city of Leon contains at least 38,000 inhabitants, and is next in rank to Santiago de Guatemala. Its only exports, at the present day, are Nicaragua wood of two classes, mahogany, fine spars for masts, excellent of their kind, allspice, sarsaparilla, brought from Costa Rica, balsam of copaivi in abundance, gums of 500 different classes, wild wax, exported, at 500 per cent. profit, to Lima, tortoise shells, very good, hides, very light, averaging from fourteen to eighteen pounds, and indigo in small quantities, though of the finest quality; also portable bedsteads of Granadilla or Ronron, a wood almost as hard as iron, similar to teak but admitting of

as brilliant a polish as the finest rose-wood.

Granada now only contains about 1000 houses, one half of what it did a century ago: it is indifferently fortified. The exports are jugged beef, hides and tallow, to the Havannah; also some pearls, tortoise-shells and Nicaragua wood, to Jamaica: it raises cocoa sufficient for its own consumption, but does not export any, being only of third rate quality, and selling for from twenty-three to twenty-seven dollars the bale or tercio of 130 pounds Spanish. Of the different classes of cocoa, that of San Antonio is the best, Soconusco the second, and Granada the third. From 2000 to 2,500 quintals of Guayaquil cocoa are consumed in the five states of Guatemala, though the plant was taken from the latter country. The cocoa of Soconusco, about a century and a half ago, was carried from thence to Vera Cruz on Indians' backs, exclusively for the king, who used to make presents of it to foreign courts. In the is-

lands of the lake of Nicaragua, partly inhabited by Indians, there are at present, some few cattle and cocoa estates; and, with respect to the territory between the lake and the sea, although it is very fertile and has been called by some writers a Paradise, yet I had the testimony of Don Simon, who was a native of it, to assure me that it is the hottest in all the country, being equally so with Realejo and Sonsonate, the port at which I landed. I would mention, here, if I have not done so before, that I felt as hot at the latter place, especially in the night, as in any place I ever visited; but, at the same time, I think it very endurable.

Saturday, 4th. Visited the Convent of San Francisco: the church is one of the handsomest buildings in the town: the monks do not exceed fifty, but they are rich and outvie the other ecclesiastical establishments in the grandeur of their processions and the internal decorations of their temple. I was much struck by some of the

pictures, especially one of Lazarus on the point of rising from the grave: whether it was from the disposition of the light or the excellence of the execution I could not decide, but I could hardly persuade myself that it was not a real human being I was contemplating: I frequently, afterwards, visited the church purposely to look at this picture: the impression of its excellence increased with my future observations; in the midday glare and in the sombre shades of the evening it still preserved its character of reality; and I do not remember, in all the churches which I have since visited in the Netherlands, having ever seen anything more awful and impressive. What is most extraordinary, it is said to be the production of a native artist.

Sunday, 5th. Called again on Valle. I found him seated on a sofa extending the whole length of the end of a saloon, and conversing with three or four visitors; two of whom were Englishmen; one, Mr. John Hines, who had come out to propose a loan

on the part of Messrs. Simmonds, and two Frenchmen. After they had left, he showed me into a small library, so completely filled with books, in large masses, not only around the walls but on the floor, that it was with difficulty we could pick a way through the apartment. He sat himself down to a small writing table, which was also profusely stored with manuscripts and printed papers, from which he selected for me, with a zeal of earnestness and gratification heightened by the enthusiasm of his natural disposition, some documents which he had been preparing or collecting for my use. Amongst these, was a detailed statement of the branches of the revenue, preceding and subsequent to the revolution ;—the bases of the constitution ;—a plan for a factory of tobacco in Gualan—and another for the settling with foreigners the territory bordering upon the port and river of San Juan in Nicaragua. He had all the mania of authorship about him : proofs and revises and lumps of manuscript, folios and quartos and

octavos, opened or interlarded with scraps of memoranda, were scattered, in profusion, over the table: it was as though he were inordinate in his requisitions at the feast of intellect. He gave me paper after paper and document after document, till I began to feel my appetite satiated at the very sight of them: they were more than I could have duly digested even had I delayed my stay in the country twice as long as I intended: I, however, took home with me as many of them as I could conveniently carry, and the rest he had the kindness to send home for me. Our being mutually engaged in researches after that sort of information to which my inquiries were particularly directed, constituted, I presume, the preliminary to that friendship which so eagerly commenced, and has since existed between this Andean Cicero and so humble a person as myself. I believe I much contributed to his feelings on this point, by presenting him with a copy of my American Dictionary, which I fortunately had with me:

he expressed much satisfaction at receiving it, and no less surprise; for, although he had heard of the work, he was not aware, he said, that I was the author of it.

The next day, I visited the Mint, and was shewn the whole establishment by the director, Don Benito Muñozo. It is a moderately sized building, and there were two presses employed in coining the new money of the republic: the greater part of the small silver currency, at this time, consisted of money called *masququina*, or pieces of ragged silver of all shapes and dimensions, varying between half the size of a sixpence and half-a-crown: it was almost impossible to know their relative values: the public, however, had no difficulty in doing so, by the assistance of some coarse and, in most cases, almost obliterated marks upon them. These pieces of tokens, for they had neither the shape nor appearance of coin, had been issued, from time immemorial, at the two provincial mints of Nicaragua and Honduras, and, in spite of

the sweatings and loppings which they had evidently undergone, continued to pass, for their nominal value, with such good faith on the part of the people, that I had frequently pieces given back into my hands, as being only of the value of half reals, whilst others, of half the size, were selected as being known to represent whole ones. It is not to be wondered at, that the new coinage was eagerly sought after. Doña Vicente, my kind hostess, was particularly anxious to take a quantity down with her to Sonsonate; and I procured her some for that purpose, in exchange for golden ounces.

The Mint, as at present established, is quite sufficient for the little work which it has to perform. There had been some talk of erecting a steam-engine instead of the clumsy apparatus which, like that in Mexico, is put into action by the power of mules; but, as there is a good supply of water within two hundred yards of the place, I pointed out the cheapness and facility of employing that element in lieu of the pre-

sent system and of that proposed; and, before I left the capital, I had the pleasure to find that the plan suggested had undergone some discussion in the proper quarters and was looked upon as feasible and advantageous.

Of the territorial resources of Guatemala, those arising from its mineral productions are admitted to be considerable; but the advantages derivable from them, have been, in a great degree, only prospective. In the province of Chiquimula, some mines have hitherto been worked to great advantage, especially those of Alotopeque and San Pantalone: the latter is inundated. Those of Santa Rosalia, Montenita, and San Antonio Abad are in the same vein, and have formerly yielded a great quantity of metal: they might again be put into activity, as nothing more is said to be wanting than to clear away the earth that has fallen in and blocked up the galleries. In the report made to the government by the assay-master of the Mint, it is proved that every quintal

of ore extracted from these mines yields seventeen marks, six ounces and three-eighths of an ounce of silver *.

There are other mines in the province of Comayagua; to facilitate the working of which the National Assembly passed a decree, on the 20th of February 1824, for delivering the gunpowder to the miners at prime cost. In Costa Rica, they are working mines of gold and silver; and some of copper have been discovered. The parties engaged in them are Mr. Trevithick and a Biscayan. The Supreme Government, as soon as the object of these persons was known, directed a letter, on the 30th of March 1824, to the Gefe of Costa Rica, to afford them every facility. In the interim, a company had been forming in England, and was established on the 1st of February 1825, with a capital of 6,750,000 dollars, under Don Antonio José de Irisarri, agreeably to a sanction transmitted to him from his govern-

* A quintal is 100lbs. net: a mark is eight ounces.

ment in the month of June preceding. A former proposition had been made for establishing a company, in November 1824, by Mr. Hines, of the house of Messrs. Symmonds and Co. of London, with a capital of £250,000. Another company was forming, whilst I was in the capital, under Mr. Viré: his partners afterwards came to London; one of them Don Francisco Lavagnino and the other Don Prospero de Herrera, a cousin of Don José de Valle. The views of this company were chiefly directed towards working the mines in the province of Honduras; but the state of our public credit would not admit the plan to take effect:—from the respectability of the parties and that assistance which Valle would have afforded his relative, there is little doubt it would have turned out highly advantageous.

The particulars of Herrera's mines, which I consider as some of the best in that country, and the expense of working them, were deposited with me by himself:—

I wish I could be brought to think that a specification of them would be useful to the public.—The conviction seems not yet to have passed by, that the precious metals must have undergone an intestine, physical, disorganization, out of sympathy, as it were, to the moral revolution with which the political features of these noble and interesting countries have, recently, been agitated*.—Owing to the duties on coinage in Mexico, Peru, and Chile, considerable quantities of the precious metals are in the habit of being sent from those countries to be coined at the Mint of Guatemala. The value of metals so transferred, appears, by an official return, to have amounted to 2,326 marks $5\frac{1}{2}$ ounces of quicksilver, and 2,120 marks of silver in bullion. There is a mint in Tegucigalpa, in the province of Honduras, which

* One of Herrera's mines at Tabanco in St. Salvador has been since profitably worked by Messrs. Bennett of Belize.—The crude ores are about to be sent to England for want of a smelting apparatus.

coins about 1,400 dollars a week of the *masququina* or cut money; and, on account of the head mint not being on a proper footing, private coining and base money are very common, particularly in Nicaragua.

The greater portion of the metals extracted from the mines of Honduras is exported in bullion and smuggled through Belize and the Mosquito shore to Jamaica. It is probable that not more than one-third of the metals produced throughout the country find their way to the head mint. The amount of monies coined in Mexico, before the revolution, was, in one year, as high as twenty-five millions, and since that event, it has fallen to ten millions of dollars. In Santiago de Guatemala, the coinage which, in 1817, was 428,661 dollars, and, in 1818, 554,564, was reduced in 1820, to 351,127 dollars. The total value of the coinage in the head mint from 1820 to 1825 was a million and a half,—about 300,000 dollars per annum *.

* See Table of Coinage in the Appendix.

CHAPTER XV.

A Guatemalian family.—State of the Slave Trade.—Fête at Jocotenango.—Political notions of the people.

THURSDAY, the 9th June.—This being the octave of Corpus Christi, great feastings and revels were renewed throughout the city: I accompanied my friends to dine with a highly respectable family of the name of Gutierrez: the dinner was altogether Spanish both as to the number and quality of the dishes. The young ladies of this family were very musical; they sung and accompanied each other both with the piano and the guitar in a style equal to any I had witnessed in these countries; besides which the piano was a tolerably good one. The Padre Ramon Solis, the confessor of the family, a deputy of the congress and much appreciated for his

talents, was also of the party, and contributed greatly to the entertainment, as he sung remarkably well, and was complete master of the guitar, accompanying himself sometimes upon that instrument and, at others, upon the piano or base-viol. The two sons were grown up, about twenty years of age, and were quiet, gentlemanly, young men, well informed and still anxious after improvement.

As we walked, after dinner, up and down the inner corridor, they put to me many pertinent questions respecting English customs, and seemed to long for the day when opportunity might be given them to visit Europe. Whatever might be their fortune or expectations in their own country, and these were not bad, as they were amongst the more opulent of the inhabitants, they were not, apparently, following a course of life exactly adapted to their views or wishes. At the end of their house, which was handsome and commodious, there was, as usual, a shop attached, which, it seems,

it was their business to attend by turns. This, indeed, is not thought any degradation, because, as I have before said, this is the only way in which moneyed people can employ their capital, except it be in farming. The next day, I called on the vice president, Don Mariano Beltranena, and was introduced by him to his brother, who, four years ago, was governor of Nicaragua. He was living in a large house, in the centre of the town: two of the rooms were filled with the archives of the old government: there was great research making for a certain treaty, which was at length found: it was that dated Versailles, 3d of September 1786, entered into between Great Britain and Spain relative to the settlement of Honduras and the liberty of cutting logwood.

The question concerning this treaty arose out of a subject of much difficulty which, now, agitated the congress: it was as follows:—some slaves belonging to the merchants of Belize, had run away and taken

shelter in the territory of Guatemala; conceiving they were protected by a decree of the congress of 17th April 1824, in which, after liberating all the slaves within their own territory, and abolishing future servitude, they set forth that "the schedules and orders of the Spanish government are hereby ratified as far as relates to the emancipation of the slaves who may pass over to our states from foreign nations."—Other documents were now searched for; amongst the rest, that of the treaty with Spain of 1795; but the most important was "*Urrutia's letter*" of 1818; and this, although these archives seemed to be kept precisely in that degree of order in which they usually are elsewhere, was, unfortunately, the very document that *could not be found.* The slaves in question had taken advantage of the above decree, in the latter end of 1824, and beginning of 1825.

In order to reclaim them, General Codd sent to Guatemala a gentleman of the name of Westby, with despatches for the govern-

ment, in which the necessity of returning them was pointed out. The supreme executive power, then consisting of Valle, Cerda, and O'Horan, were in favour of giving up the deserters, and, referring the matter to the congress, recommended their restoration. The measure, being opposed, was passed over to a committee, which, in its report to the congress, supported the opinion of the executive; and the congress, having agreed to deliver them up, the party who were of the contrary opinion, required that, as the decision had the effect of altering an article of the constitution, it should be passed to the senate to obtain their sanction, as it would not otherwise be operative. After being referred accordingly first to the executive, and then reconsidered in the congress, the question was lost, by wanting only four votes of the two thirds prescribed in such a case.

It must be confessed that the business was decided with great party spirit, and con-

trary to the wishes of the executive; and, in justice to the authorities, it is necessary to state that, the causes, which led to so unsatisfactory a termination of the affair, originated in some incidental points of gratuitous and pernicious interference on the part of an English gentleman resident there, and who, when the matter was referred to the assembly, advised one or more of the members, in set and plausible terms, not to accede to the restoration sought for by the intendant of Belize. Mr. Hines, the gentleman alluded to, had not any improper intention; but every Englishman, whatever might be his rank or situation in life, felt himself warranted and called upon to dabble in politics; not knowing the mischief they might do; and he could not resist the temptation;—but, when he saw the turn the business had taken, he expressed himself much surprised and very sorry for the difficulties he had unwittingly occasioned. On his return to England, the poor man, who, I perceived, on my leaving

Guatemala, was very unhappy, died at Belize.

Saturday, 11th June. One of the Messrs. Ayzenenas being about to depart for England, I addressed a letter to General Codd, informing him that I should be at Jzabal on the 20th July, and requesting him to send me his schooner to convey me thence to Belize, in order that I might be in time to return in one of the passage ships of the season, with convoy;—a precaution I understood to be most necessary, owing to the horrible piracies which were daily being committed throughout the Gulf of Florida and the neighbouring islands.

Sunday, 12th. Spent the greater part of this day at Jocotenango, a village about a mile out of the town: the fête was indifferently attended: after church, there was a grand display of fireworks, the effect of which was completely lost by the dazzling brilliance of the sun: they however appeared to be valuable, if we might judge by the complicated frame-machinery, the

explosions, and the smoke. There were stone benches in the Plaza, which was shaded not only by its great tree in the middle, but by bower-hedges on two sides of it; under these, too, there were seats for the accommodation of the company, who were either availing themselves of them or strolling through the verdant lanes with which the place was surrounded. Having come to the end of one of these in conversation with an English gentleman who had been in Peru, Chile, Guayaquil, and other parts of these republics, I was much amused at the information he was giving me.

We had now come to the verge of a wide undulating tract, covered with grass, and, here and there, studded with thickets of fine trees. My companion had been giving me details of the nature and returns of the indigo and cochineal trade: his observations were full of information, mingled with slipslop, and very disjointed and irrelevant: he did not, himself, seem aware of the value of his materials, but kept talking on,

and heaping one remark upon another, like pieces of silk and fustian on a draper's counter: his tongue was as profuse as his memory was retentive. At last he came to a pause.—This is a man of considerable observation, thought I, and perhaps I could make him useful in my researches after the information I am obtaining; so looking at him with as much respect as I could assume, I said, "You have been a great traveller, sir, I see." "Yes, sir, I have, indeed", was his reply. "You took notes on your journeys, I presume." "Notes, sir, notes," as he regarded me with a look of mingled pity and perplexity, "no, sir," said he,—"I took nothing but dollars and doubloons."

It was now time to turn back. In passing through one of the lanes, I heard the sound of guitars, and tried to open a wicket, at which an old sow was standing, with her nose thrust through the bars: I could not displace her from her position without behaving towards her more severely than I

wished, so great appeared to be her confidence in, and attachment to, human society: I proceeded across a farm-yard to the spot from whence the harmony issued. The room was full of visitors, all dressed in their best holiday attire: some of the women wore short red petticoats, with deep plain white flounces round the bottom, gathered up in very thick plaits over their hips, with a white border; thence upwards, they had only a chemise to cover them, but, as this was starched into stiff folds, it supplied, in some measure, the place of a jacket: the hair in front was worn in the Madona form, and the hinder part, being of great length, was divided into tightly plaited cords which were twisted round the head in various devices. A pink satin shoe, extremely long and wide at the quarters, without stockings, completed the costume. Most of the Guatemalian damsels, that is, all the lower classes, dress in this style, excepting that they more frequently go without shoes, and at other times wear the finest

silk stockings with shoes of the most delicate texture.

The men have seldom any clothing on down to the waist except the shirt: a loose pair of roughly tanned, brown chamoise breeches, open at the knees, makes up the extent of their toilette: they nevertheless wear their hair parted like the women, or suffer it to hang down in short curls like those which seem to be prescriptively appropriate to the temples of an English tar; and it is always long behind, being confined in plaits terminating in one or two tails, according to the dignity of the wearer, or the more, perhaps, intelligible distinction between a barrister's wig and that of a sergeant-at-law.

With all these whimsicalities, (I am speaking of the native inhabitants,) I think them a gentle and harmless set of creatures. Out of the whole population of Guatemala, there is not perhaps, a proportion of three tenths of them entitled to be considered as possessing any political opinion, or that notion of temporal authority which causes

men to feel an interest in the government of the country in which they live. The other seven tenths may, however, be presumed to be favourable to the independent system, inasmuch as they have already experienced from it substantial benefit in the remission of taxation and the abolition of slavery. It is true, that the humble portion of society to which I particularly allude, is so widely separated, both by local situation and intellectual feeling, from the seat of government and the moral spring of political transactions, as to be scarcely sensible even of the existence of the former, and seldom alive to any impulse which it might be attempted to impart to them through the remote vibration of the latter. Yet, although they know but little of the nature of presidents, councils, and congresses, they all know their respective parish curate; and as he is the most important authority with which they are practically acquainted, it is natural that they should be much guided by his example and

advice. Most of these curates are of indigenous or Creolian extraction: all the best clerical appointments were formerly reserved for the old Spaniards:—by the new system, the latter party is excluded to the benefit of the former, and this is a reason why the clergy, as a body, may be considered favourable to the new constitution; and, hence it follows that the people, being much influenced by them, would, if called upon by the supreme power, cheerfully devote themselves to the defence and preservation of the national independence. Amidst the middle and higher orders of society, scarcely any remains of a Spanish party even nominally exist, and the old Iturbide party is immerged in that of the Independents.

I shall, elsewhere, give a sketch of the revolution of this republic, and also of the differences which have continued to disturb its tranquillity: I cannot, however, help observing, en passant, that the latter are by no means of that serious nature which the British public are generally disposed to

consider them. I could discover a liberality of sentiment prevalent amongst all classes, and also a very friendly disposition towards foreigners, especially the English, whom they seemed to consider as so many animated portions of constitutional liberty: —it was, also, gratifying to me to witness the high veneration entertained, and so often expressed by the Guatemalian authorities, for his Britannic Majesty and his Majesty's Government.

CHAPTER XVI.

Dinner at the President's.—Visit to the old city of Guatemala or Antigua.—Its three extraordinary mountains.

SUNDAY, 19th. I this day, had the honour of dining with the president, at the Palace: the party consisted of M. Soza, Minister for the Home and Foreign Affairs; M. Beteta, Minister of Finance; General Millar, and M. Isidro Mendez, both chief members of the senate. We were, altogether, only six in number. Dinner was served at two o'clock. There were seldom more than two or three dishes at a time on the table, each of which the President himself helped, by putting some portions of it on a separate plate which was successively offered to the company. As I felt aware it might appear deficiency in good breeding not to take, at least, a small portion of every dish presented to me, I of course helped myself to each in routine: they

succeeded one another by such numbers of removes, that my fortitude began to falter; fortunately, however, it did not quite yield, as I should have been sorry to have given offence where such marked kindness and attention were evidently meant to be shewn. During the dessert, the President, after a short speech on the rapid progress of their independence and the stability it had acquired, drank a *brinda* or toast to those who had assisted in promoting or otherwise befriending it; and concluded by drinking the health of his Britannic Majesty and the English people. In returning thanks, I wished that Guatemala might continue to enjoy the happiness and tranquillity she experienced;—that, as she was the last to obtain her independence, so she might be the last to lose it; and that, though the youngest of the new states, she might, like Joseph, who surpassed his brethren, eventually exceed in honour and importance all the rest of her rivalling confederates.

The conversation now turned on the central position of the Republic, its consequent facilities for commerce and intercourse not only with Jamaica, and the British islands, but also, through her medium, with Peru and Chile. The proposed navigation by the lake of Nicaragua was also discussed, by which the British intercourse with China and the East Indies would be so much facilitated,—together with other subjects of equal political and commercial importance as well to the Republic as to the empire of Great Britain. I had the pleasure of being told by the President, on this occasion, that he had been informed by Don Juan de Mayorga, their minister at Mexico, of the interest I had taken in favour of their Republic. He had heard, he said, that I had, on many occasions, spoken in support of its new organization, in answer to parties at Mexico who had wished Guatemala to be still dependent upon that Republic; and he concluded by drinking my health, and hoping that I

might return and *radicate* (that was his expression) myself in the country. Flattering as these sentiments were, I did not feel that I merited them:—nothing would give me greater pleasure than to return to live amongst them; but as my whole life had hitherto been devoted, however humbly, to the service of my country, at home, I could not expect to be able to return without some official employment, which it was equally uncertain if I should ever have the good fortune to obtain.—The conversation afterwards took a lighter turn, perhaps much more interesting to my readers if I should repeat it, but which, I beg leave to tell them I cannot; they will agree with me that moments passed in friendship and conviviality should always be esteemed sacred, even in the company of our equals; but that to reveal the confidence of superiors, when they honour us with it, betrays, something like a weakness of understanding with a badness of heart.—Tea and coffee were introduced, without the removal of the

cloth. We then passed into an adjoining room, where there was a table laid out with liqueurs and cigars, where we spent another hour very socially; and about six o'clock in the evening, we took our leave.

Monday, 20th June. About five o'clock this morning I mounted my horse with a view of visiting the former city of Santiago de Guatemala, now called the "Antigua": it lies about nine leagues to the s.w. of the new capital, towards the South Sea; and is the town where the congress of the State is held. Although it has been often visited by dreadful earthquakes, its population has, always, within a short period of each successive calamity, reached 8000 or 12,000 souls. The canon Dighero, who was devoting his scientific labours towards the effecting of a good communication, either by road or canal, between the present capital and the Pacific, informed me that he remembered the earthquake which took place on the 29th of July, 1773, and which was succeeded by a further shock on the 2d of

December of the same year: on neither of these occasions, did the whole of the inhabitants desert the city; and it was, at length, endeavoured to compel them to remove from it by a royal mandate, but without effect; nor did the ecclesiastics of the cathedral quit the old capital, until about the year 1779, although they were warned to do so by two other smart shocks, which occurred in the year 1775. The "*Incorrigibles*," as the present inhabitants are aptly called, amount to about 18,000 souls; and houses are both scarce and dear. The road, for the first five miles out of the new city, is over fine grassy downs; after which, it becomes more woody; then you pass through deep glens and climb the sides of precipitous ravines, which continue to the entrance of the Antigua: on approaching it, I was greatly struck with the romantic beauty of the town itself, as well as of the surrounding scenery. I will attempt to describe it.

Two sides of the city, those to the south

and east, are bounded by the three grand conical mountains of Guatemala, and the other two sides by craggy and luxuriant *sierras* of less elevation; amongst which winds the road to the new capital. The most beautiful of the three large mountains is to the east: it is called the Water Mountain, as emitting, at times, cold water from its northern side: the other two, to the south, also emit water, but as the same is always hot, they have acquired the designation of the Fire Mountains. The hot water, which flows from the north side of them, is very medicinal, and is called De Bartolomé Acatenango. There is a larger mountain to the south of these volcanoes called Pacaya, and another to the west called Atitañ. The three largest mountains are, in fact, quite close to the city, and they rise with gentle, uniform, slopes from the very streets of it, being cultivated nearly half the way up with the nopal or cochineal plant and indigo, and interspersed with luxuriant gardens and gro-

tesque Indian villages; having the remainder of their heights adorned, to their very summits, with trees of an exuberant growth. The height of the plain of Old as well as New Guatemala is about 1,800 feet above the level of the sea: the tops of the mountains, taken from the same level, are about a league or 15,000 feet high. They therefore rise, from their base, to the height of about 13,200 feet, which, although it is 2,547 feet lower than the inferior limit of perpetual snow, is (I shall presently show) from 1000 to 3000 feet higher from the level of their base than any other mountains in North or South America.

The loftiest mountain, and nearest to the city of Mexico, is that of Ajusco, towards the south; its main height is 12,052 feet; but, standing on the verge of that table land, which is itself elevated 7,470 feet, its actual height from its base to its summit is only 4,582 feet. Ajusco, seen at the distance of ten leagues from the city of Mexico, is a noble sight; how then must

I have been struck with the mountains of the Antigua, whose bases arise from the verge of its streets to an elevation nearly three times as great as that of Ajusco; and which, from their relative elevation above the level of the sea, and on account of their being situated under a warmer latitude, are covered with perpetual verdure, to their very summits! Chimborazo, the highest peak of the Andes in South America, is 21,441 feet; but it rests upon a plain of 9,514, leaving for its actual height from its base only 11,927 feet, 2,700 of which are covered with snow.

The two highest of the Mexican mountains Popocatēpetl and Ixtacxihuātle, viewed from a distance, present, with their snow-clad summits, a grand and terrific appearance. The loftiest, which is 17,710 feet above the level of the sea, rises from its base to the height of about 10,000 feet, whereas the three indestructible volcanoes of Guatemala (it is extraordinary that they have no names,—perhaps Shadrach, Me-

shach, and Abednego might do) are elevated, as we have seen, 13,000 feet. There is not, probably, in the whole world, so perfect a cone as the Water Mountain of the three in question; and, although it does not appear terrifically grand like the other mountains of these regions, it is preeminently beautiful, and strikes the imagination with sensations of amazement and delight.

CHAPTER XVII.

Description of the Antigua, or Old City of Guatemala.

I HAD obtained, through the obliging interference of Mr. Bayley, an order to the steward, who inhabited the chateau of the Marquis Ayzenena, to furnish me with accommodation, of which I gladly availed myself; for, as I before said, houses were extremely scarce, and there was no such thing as an inn in the place. It happened that Doña Maria, the daughter of my hostess, had adjourned to this beautiful spot for the purpose of spending a few days on an annual visit to a lady of the name of Doña Joanita de Quiñones, one of the most respectable and, I may add, most numerous families in the place. She was a pleasing little woman of about twenty-six years of age: her husband, much more advanced in life, was a physician, and

at this time, in the capital, with his two eldest sons. She had had nine or ten children, all very pretty and engaging, but as varied, in complexion, as a bunch of sweet peas. In passing down the town, I saw two or three of them, as they were squatting on the high window-seats, amusing themselves with their playthings: they poked their little faces through the iron bars of the lattice, and I stopped to regard them: their beauty and innocence had attracted me; but, after gazing at them, an instant, I passed on.

Having taken up my quarters at the Marquess's, I strolled about the town, and made inquiries for the house of Doña Joanita, not having been aware that it was the same as that in which the children had excited my attention. I made several inquiries and, at length, entered the dwelling of one of her relations, who lived nearly opposite to her, and found myself introduced to her three cousins, who were, I afterwards discovered, considered the belles

of Antigua. My visit to this place was quite unexpected, but Doña Joanita, with a degree of hospitality which I could not but appreciate, and which, unfortunately, is too often found in the inverse ratio of civilization, invited me to be her guest, during my stay in the city: I accepted her obliging offer, sleeping at the chateau where my bed and baggage were deposited.—I spent the next three days in viewing the remains of this enchanting place: in my excursions, I was generally accompanied by some portion of the family, especially by the pretty children who had, at first, so greatly excited my attention: one of them, a little girl of eight years of age, although two of her sisters were perfect brunettes, like their mother, was as fair as an angel, and I might add almost as beautiful: what was extraordinary, her name was Angeles; she was a quick intelligent child, and I used to amuse her with fabricated stories of giants, whales, dwarfs and magicians, —and such other nonsense as seldom

fails to excite the admiration of children of her own, and every other, growth; but I was shocked as she used, for every interjection of surprise, the name of our Redeemer, pronouncing it with a guttural tone, which made the word *Heezoos!* It is lamentable that this irreverend custom should so prevail amongst the South Americans, for, although, without doubt, the expression is innocently used, as I am sure it was in the present instance, it impresses foreigners with ideas of their levity regarding religious subjects, which they are far from intending to manifest, and with which, therefore, they ought not indiscriminately to be charged.

In one of my excursions about the city, I visited the chief spots which had suffered by the earthquakes. To the south, stand the remains of the immense convent of Christ: the portico and a part of a side wall, still having the appearance of being newly erected from the freshness of the masonry, are all that are left to denote the

place where it once stood: all the rest of the inclosure was become one spacious cemetery, for nearly two hundred souls were buried under the ruins, which could now scarcely be recognized amidst the rank herbage with which they were overgrown. The whole of the city, indeed, presents a splendid panorama of romantic dilapidation.

The edifices of public worship had been no less than fifty or sixty in number: vestiges of them may still be faintly traced in some places by the inquiring eye; in others, some dismembered column stands like a tall ghost amidst the mournful groves. I had ridden, with a large party, up the side of the Water Mountain, to the height of about half a mile, whence I gained a more comprehensive view of the scene beneath me. I asked many questions of my companions, but it was with the greatest difficulty that I could obtain the least information required; the reason appeared obvious: they had been born and bred in the city, and, consequently knew not any-

thing about it, like the cockney, who, in boyhood apprenticed, and afterwards settled for life, at the top of Ludgate hill, never beheld the inside of St. Paul's, whereas the Yorkshireman, who only once visited London, and that but for two days, had been to the top of the dome of it, and seen Westminster Abbey and the lions in the Tower, to boot.

Being thus obliged to rely upon my own observations, I was of opinion that the town had covered an extent of ground as large as the present site of Mexico, and about twice as large as that of the new capital of Guatemala. The houses were originally built of two stories, with richly carved friezes over the doors and windows; but the later erections are exactly according to the form prescribed by law, not exceeding eighteen feet in height, with one story only; on the same plan as those of the new city. The fear of earthquakes having passed by, (it is five and twenty years since the last

happened,) they are raising dwellings in all directions, without the least attention to internal comfort or decoration. Indeed, accommodations are so scarce, that two or three families are obliged to live in the same house; and, as it is the custom of the inhabitants of the *Nueva* to come hither to recreate themselves by change of air, apartments, at the migrating season, are rather to be obtained for love than for money. This happened to be the case with regard to the season in question, and the town was redundantly full. Besides those who sought the recovery of their health were others influenced solely by amusement; for in addition to the admitted salubrity of the place, the roads between the two cities, although impassable for carriages, are so tolerable as not to offer absolute impediment to invalids, with respect to the journey. The settlers here employ themselves in the cultivation of cochineal and other agricultural pursuits. Without enumerating

the vestiges of all the temples of worship with which the town was adorned, I will mention the few which I had an opportunity of observing.

On the east side, close to the skirt of the Water Mountain, are the ruins of the Escuela, Santa Ana, Calvario, San Christoval, San Juan, Cascon, San Pedro Huetlan, Santa Maria and San Bartolomē. On the west is the superb arch of the choir of St. Domingo, standing in a solitary and almost perfect state, as if newly erected,—the convents, towards the north, of St. Geronimo and St. Sebastian, are those which have suffered the least; but the whole number now used for religious worship does not exceed seven or eight. The climate I found much the same as that of the new city: the average of the thermometer being 75° in the day and 63° at night, and, in the summer, about ten degrees higher. The steward of the Marquess's chateau had a small plot of ground inclosed with mud walls near his cottage;

and, seeing him busily employed, early one morning, I joined him, to observe what he was doing. He was planting cochineal: to those who are unacquainted with the process, it may be useful to state that this operation is dissimilar from any other mode of cultivation.

The *nopal* is a plant consisting of little stem, but expanding itself into wide thick leaves, more or less prickly according to its different kind: one or two of these leaves being set as one plant, at the distance of two or three feet square from each other, are inoculated with the cochineal, which, I scarcely need say, is an insect: it is the same as if you would take the blight off an apple or other common tree and rub a small portion of it on another tree free from the contagion, when the consequence would be that the tree so inoculated would become covered with the blight: a small quantity of the insects in question is sufficient for each plant, which, in proportion as it increases its leaves, is sure to be covered

with the costly parasyte. When the plant is perfectly saturated, the cochineal is scraped off with great care. The plants are not very valuable for the first year, but, from questions I put to the steward about the produce, it appeared that they might be estimated as yielding after the second year, from a dollar to a dollar and a half profit on each plant. Indigo is described as a substance of a deep blue colour, containing about fifty per cent of pure colouring matter: the analysis of indigo, says Brande, in his Manual of Chemistry, page 49, where he proposes to ascertain the proportion of colouring matter, which varies much in different samples, may be performed by the successive action of water, alcohol, and muriatic acid. One hundred parts of Guatemala indigo thus treated afforded to water twelve parts, to alcohol thirty, to muriatic acid ten, to residue of pure indigo forty-eight. This analysis would seem to prove that the indigo of Guatemala is superior to that of any other country.

Wednesday, 23d June. I called on Don Juan de Barrundia, the gefe politico of the state: it happened to be his saint's day, or, as we should call it in English, his birth-day, it being usual in these countries to take the name of the saint on whose festival any one is born. All the authorities and most respectable inhabitants of the place were paying their court to him: I staid with him about half an hour, during which time the conversation turned principally upon the political organization of the country, and the federative system which was adopted. I had been given to understand, and subsequent events have proved the truth of the assertion, that this person was not so well affected towards the federal system as could be wished for the tranquillity of the republic: as almost all the disturbances which have since occurred in Guatemala have arisen principally from the disposition to impugn the authority of the federal government, it might be as well to give my readers a short sketch of the principles on which that federation is establish-

ed: the same will, I apprehend, prove, beyond all doubt, that if once these petty feelings of disagreement can be allayed, the power of the government will stand upon a firm and lasting basis.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Government and Constitution of the Federation.—Origin and Progress of the Revolution.—Foreign and Domestic Relations.

THE present political government of Guatemala, like those of the other new republics of the Western Hemisphere is, more or less, founded on the principles of the constitution of the northern United States. It is a representative federal republic. The legislative power of the nation resides in the federal congress, composed of representatives chosen by the people; and it is in their province to enact laws touching the direct interest of the whole republic; to form the general regulations for the national army, to fix the expenses of the general administration of the public service; to declare war or make peace; to prescribe and settle the laws of trade, and

to regulate the coinage. A senate composed of two senators, elected, popularly, by each of the states, is appointed to give sanction to the law, and to assist with its advice the executive power, in weighty matters. It has also the power of proposing for nomination to the chief offices or employments of the federation, and watches over the conduct of the individuals employed. The president, elected by the people, is invested with the executive power, taking care that the law is fulfilled, entering, with the previous advice of the senate, into negociations and treaties with foreign powers, directing the military force, and nominating the functionaries of the federation. A vice-president, elected also by the people, is authorized to act for the president in certain cases established by law.—A supreme court of justice formed of individuals, also elected by the people, takes cognizance, in the last instance, of the matters likewise expressed in the constitution, and has power of judicature over the pre-

sident, senators, ambassadors to foreign parts, secretaries of state and other high official characters. The federal republic is divided into five sovereign independent states, which are Guatemala, Honduras, Sonsonate, Nicaragua, and Costa-Rica. Each of these states contains:

1st. An assembly of deputies elected by the people, which dictates laws, ordinances, and regulations; determines the expense of its administration, decrees imposts, and fixes the military force in unison with the federal congress.

2d. A council of individuals named by the people, which gives or denies its sanction to the law, advises the executive power, and proposes for nomination the principal public officers.

3d. A chief elected by the people, who executes the laws, nominates the public servants, and disposes of the military force.

4th. A gefe politico, or vice-chief, nominated by the people, who acts in cases provided by the law.

5th. A superior court of judges, named by the people, which exercises the judicial power, in the last instance.

From the above, it will be seen that there exists a complete uniformity not only between the political governments of the several states, but between each of these governments and that of the general system of the federation, of which they are, at once, a component and imitative portion. How far this sort of political organization is practically expedient, it is somewhat hazardous to pronounce. The federal congress being held in the capital of the state, the provincial congress of that state is obliged to be held at the Antigua: the power of the president of the federation and the gefe politico are so closely situated with regard to each other, as hardly to be definable.

"Non bene conveniunt, nec in unâ sede morantur, Majestas et"—Majestas!

This circumstance had led to some disagreements between the two parties simi-

larly situated at Mexico, and was the exact cause of the coolness which was politically existing, at this moment, between the same authorities in the Central Republic. Previously to adverting more particularly to the civil disturbances of which the unfortunate encouragement of this feeling has been productive, and which has prevented the British Government from entering into relations with this highly favoured republic, I shall trouble my readers, whilst I am sitting in company with my refractory host, Don Juan, the President of the *State* of Guatemala, to cast their eyes over the following short notices of the revolution of the republic at large, which has led to the independence and present system of its government:—they will, thus, be enabled to trace the sources from which the now-existing authorities have been established, and to judge of the probability of their ultimate consistency and strength.

The first symptoms of a desire for independence were manifested upon the French

invasion of Spain: revolutionary opinions began, then, to be canvassed and to gain ground. In 1811, 1812, and 1813, certain more positive movements in favour of independence took place; and, in these, the province of San Salvador took the lead. Nothing, however, occurred of any consequence till the year 1820, when, the constitution of Spain, having been re-established, was, in July of the same year, promulgated in Guatemala.

On the 15th September 1821, the Spanish government, at the instigation of several of the provinces, particularly of San Salvador, and having been further induced thereto by the circumstance of Chiapa having obtained its independence, on the basis of the Mexican plan of Iguala, formed a junta of all the existing authorities, to deliberate on the measures to be adopted. This junta, having, by a great majority, declared in favour of a total separation from the mother country, published a General Act of Independence; upon which there sprung

up two parties; one in favour of absolute independence of either Mexico or Spain or even of a federative union of Guatemalian States, and the other in favour of the plan of Iguala which, it is well known, proposed the establishment of a monarchy, and invited the Bourbons to the throne.

The old Spanish party, in the choice of difficulties, acceded to conditions of a temporizing nature and became advocates to the plan of Iguala. Leon, capital of Nicaragua, and Comayagua, capital of Honduras, also declared for the same form of government; but the majority of the towns and settlements of each of these provinces adhered, in their proclamations, to the General Act of Independence, as declared by the junta.—The supreme government was now placed in the hands of a provisional junta, in the independent or federative interest, until a more regular form of government should be settled by a congress, which was then being convened for that purpose. Such was the state of affairs, when on the 19th October, 1821,

Iturbide issued to the Guatemalians his first public manifesto; in which, after congratulating them upon their independence, he endeavoured to persuade them that, in order to further so salutary a measure, he had directed a numerous and well appointed force to enter their frontiers. The independents did not take this act as kindly as it was intended, but the old Spaniards hailed him as their protector, and, thence, instead of "Serviles" as they had hitherto been called, they christened themselves with the name of "Imperialists."

The head of this party who was president of the junta, and also gefe politico, was Filisola, who had been, previously, a principal promoter of the plan of Iguala. It was chiefly through the interest of this individual that, on the 30th November of the same year, 1821, the above manifesto of Iturbide was circulated through the provinces: to that document he attached one of his own; pointing out to the people that the only alternative they had was to unite themselves

to Mexico or to sustain a war with that country, whose troops were already marching against them. Before adequate time could be given to ascertain the sentiments of the different towns, he, as the President of the junta, together with his party who voted in favour of the union between Guatemala and Mexico, pronounced that union, on the 5th January, 1822. The province of Chiquimula immediately attempted to separate itself from this alliance: Costa-Rica and Granada, the latter of which is a part of the province of Nicaragua, were also averse to the union, and the absolute separation of San Salvador was settled by the act of 11th January, 1822.

In the mean time, the provisional junta of Guatemala was dissolved: Filisola led his troops against San Salvador, and met with a signal defeat in an action fought on the 3d July. He was again defeated by the people of that province in another action, on the 23d February, 1823: after this, having returned to Guatemala, just

at the moment the first news of the revolution against Iturbide was received, he agreed that the congress should be convoked as originally constituted by the Act of Independence: the same was carried into effect, by an act of 29th March; and, on the 2d July, the said congress decreed that the Mexican troops should evacuate the Guatemalian territory. In their march through the capital city of the province of Chiapa, of which Filisola was the commandant, some difficulties arose: he insisted upon the separation of that province from the Guatemalian federation, showing that it belonged to the government of Mexico; and, whilst Chiapa seemed silently to acquiesce in this arrangement, Filisola continued his march, leaving a detachment of his division under the command of Colonel Codallos, but who was afterwards expelled by the joint military forces of Tutla and Comitañ.

Although, at the present day, the Mexicans claim this territory in the list of the

provinces of their federation, and it is not inserted in that of Guatemala, yet it is certain that, from the time alluded to up to the present, the matter has been considered one of great question, and representations of a friendly nature respecting the right of proprietorship are still going on between the two republics.

The disquietudes which had occurred in San Salvador having been allayed by the deposition of Iturbide, in the first instance, and further settled by the effects of a friendly understanding with the seat of government, it would be unnecessary to detail them. Some skirmishes also took place in Nicaragua, but not of sufficient interest to require comment.

The barriers opposed to a federal government having been thus broken down by the deposition of Iturbide, the old Spanish and, afterwards, the Imperial, party was confounded, and became too much alarmed to give any further vent to their opinions. The constituent assembly was,

consequently, installed on the 24th June, 1823. On the 21st July of the same year, the independence was declared by the assembly, and on the 17th December, the bases of the constitution were published. In the mean time, a supreme executive power had been established, composed of three individuals elected by the assembly, whilst the nation itself took the name of "THE UNITED PROVINCES OF THE CENTRE OF AMERICA."

From this period Guatemala began to act as a free sovereign state: on the 9th June, 1824, its independence was recognized by Colombia: on the 3d August, its legation had arrived, and was duly received, in the United States of North America: on the 20th August it was recognized by Mexico: on the 3d September, its ambassador was admitted by that republic: on the 6th of the same month, the installation of the congress of Costa-Rica completed the established form of the federation: on the 15th, the federal congress was installed: on the 22d November the

constitution was signed by the deputies; and on the 6th December the congress sanctioned the loan of Messrs. Barclay and Co. for 7,142,047 dollars; but which, owing to the grand money-crisis in this country, was, it is well known, never negotiated, except to a very inconsiderable extent. Had it been so, the government would have been strengthened and the troublesome effects of the late civil dissentions would, in all probability, have been prevented: as it is, as we shall presently see, they have been put down by the arm of the government, without that pecuniary aid which they had contracted for, and which they had a right to expect. It is problematical if any one of the old European governments would have been able to maintain its dignity and power under a similar disappointment.

The succeeding year of 1825 was also marked by the following circumstances, conducive to the honour and stability of the republic.

On the 21st February, the consul from

the Northern United States arrived and received his exequatur: on the 25th March, a treaty of alliance offensive and defensive, was ratified with Colombia: on the 10th April the constitution was sworn to by the public authorities: on the 21st of that month, took place the ceremony of the inauguration of the president:—this happened the same day on which I set off from Mexico:—and, on the 23d July, Mr. O'Reilley arrived at Izabal, which also, peculiarly, happened the Sunday that I reached the coast in order to embark for Great Britain.*

I trust that, without any pedantry or affectation, these comments will not be considered as misplaced. I have always spoken freely in favour of the stability of the federation of the Central Republic, and the British public will be able to judge from the above simple statement of facts, whether, or not, I have had reason for doing so.

* A Minister from the United States also arrived, about this period, but died from the effects of the climate, before he could reach the capital.

What ensued with regard to the sentiments of Don Juan Barrundia, the gefe politico, after I took leave of him, on this occasion, I cannot pretend to say; but I might, perhaps, be warranted in judging thus favourably of the general aspect of affairs: indeed, the Gefe expressed the most friendly wishes towards the promotion of a good understanding with the British government, and in so doing evinced much politeness and personal attention towards myself; the only way in which he could practically demonstrate his feelings; and, from the purport of the conversation which I afterwards had with the President of the Republic, in which his Excellency seemed to smile at the probability of any overt act of hostility being likely to take place between them, I thought it fair to conclude that the Republic of Guatemala was, probably, at that time, in a proper state for the immediate recognition of its independence on the part of Great Britain.

CHAPTER XIX.

Domestic Convivialities.

On returning to dine with Doña Joanita, I found the house filled with company: it was also *her* natal day. A table was laid in the chief saloon for a large dinner party; and we sat down, upwards of thirty in number, to one of the best Spanish dinners that I had seen in those countries. Don J. Montufar, the deputy of the Antigua to the federal congress, to whom I had letters of introduction, besides having been intimately acquainted with him in Mexico, presided. Toasts to his Britannic Majesty and the people of England were reiterated upon this occasion, with such a spirit of delight and exhilaration that to believe them not to be sincere would be to believe, which I never can, that the Guatemalians are the most deceitful race of beings in the world.

After dinner, the whole party walked out

to witness the rejoicings which were going on in the town in honour of the birth-day of the gefe politico: groups of the inhabitants were dancing in the street, and, amidst the discharge of salvos of fire-works were heard the brazen jargon of the war-inspiring trumpet mingled with the peaceful tinkling of the guitar: a partial illumination added to the brilliancy of the scene: the night was fair and calm: hardly a breath of air was felt: the luxuriant groves, which surrounded with their barriers of evergreens this romantic city, were as motionless as the mountains on which they grew. The moon was perpendicular in the blue canopy of the cloudless sky, and no perceptible shade was cast on the objects it enlightened; it was suspended in its airy dome like a *sin-umbrà* lamp over the theatre of these festivities. I had strolled away from the company to muse upon the beautiful scene: the distant buzz of life contrasted itself strangely with the solemn stillness of the countless unknown graves, on which I trod: every footstep seemed a warning of dissolution;—

for the ground echoed, and the dust was teeming with the remains of those who had been entombed in the midst of life: twice in half a century had the inhabitants of this beautiful but awful spot been cut off in the meridian of their enjoyments, snapped off like flowers from the stem, and——but their surviving relatives seemed unmindful of their fate.

I had again entered the town: the Plaza or Grand Square was still thronged with those who, from gaiety, indolence, or curiosity, had come to witness the festive scenes which were offered to their enjoyment. The fireworks were not exhausted, the lamps were still brilliant, and the crowd was yet dense. Two opposite sides of the square were occupied, one by the municipal house and public offices, the other by a place of worship, and the two other sides by mercantile store houses and magazines for provisions;—the whole presenting an epitome of church, state, agriculture and commerce. Whilst these thrive, political economists say people will be happy,

and, even when they do not, they may, sometimes, be found to be happy without them. Those who were assembled in this instance seemed to be as joyous and free from thought as if such subjects had never entered into their contemplation. The transitions from care to frivolity, from anxiety to carelessness, are so rapid and imperceptible, especially amongst the vulgar, that it is the province of a wise government to provide, as much as possible, for the amusements of the public. The privileges upon which the fairs in England were established were chiefly adapted to this end; and the maintenance of similar rights by the meaner classes in the South American republics is, perhaps, amongst the principal causes why they have remained faithful to whatsoever dynasty they may have become subjected.

As I proceeded up the long street which led to the house of Doña Joanita, I passed a band of musicians, consisting of three guitars, a violin and a bass: as the dancing was subsiding in the square, they were look-

ing out for employment, in some domestic meeting for the remainder of the evening. On entering the gateway of the court yard, I stumbled against a carriage: it was without horses, and the only carriage, not only at the rout I was attending, but, I believe, in all the town. Why it stood there, I do not know, for it was very wide and large, and almost filled up the gateway. I found that it constantly stood there, and, indeed, seemed always ready to be *going out*, but, like some rich and noble specimen of *cabinet work*, reflecting credit and honour on the proprietor, it had become stationary, and *maintained its place* for the purpose, I conclude, of supporting the *dignity of the establishment.*

Upon entering the grand sala, it presented a very animating spectacle: the sconces on the sides of the walls were all lighted with as many candles as they could hold, which were at least a dozen; the two bedsteads had been removed; there was great bustling amongst the servants,

and many of the poorer classes had formed themselves into groups, as usual, around the spacious door: the company, which already amounted to forty persons, were, many of them, better dressed than at the dinner; especially the young ladies, who, by their lively deportment and conversation, seemed to evince a degree of enjoyment rather anticipated than felt, but which is seldom felt equal to the anticipation: there were, evidently, preparations for a ball; and there are few young ladies, I believe, who have returned from one so happy as they went to it. Amongst the company, I discovered the three cousins of the hostess, whom I had called upon by mistake: they were, certainly, with one or two exceptions, the belles of the party. One of these ladies appeared to have two lovers, each of whom was so zealous in his attentions, that the poor girl was quite bewildered, and so, instead of dancing all the evening, very pleasantly, as she had anticipated,—in order not to offend them, she danced with neither; but, whether by

reality or design, became so much affected with her situation, as to be obliged to lie down, which she very conveniently did in one of the beds of the next room. As there was only a door-way between the apartments, she was, of course, constantly attended by her gallants, who took her ices and such other refreshments as her case required. Her young female acquaintances appeared to feel much for her situation, and, to do them justice, I observed them often peeping, with anxiety, to see if they could render any assistance. One of them, not so well gifted as the rest in point of personal attractions, seemed to be the most sedate young person in the whole party; she was, also, of a very contemplative disposition; for, having fixed herself at the end of the bench near the door-way, she kept her eyes, as it were, rivetted on the couch of her unfortunate companion. How amiable is sympathy!!

Whether it was sympathy for her female companions or sympathy with her lovers I

don't know, but the fair invalid, before the ball was over, relieved the former from their watchings and the latter from their attendance. She came into the room with a sprightly air, and, whilst throwing a side-long glance of consolation to one lover, threw her arm round the waist of the other, and glided gently off into the graceful movements of the waltz.—This was very puzzling: she had been decidedly indisposed, and was now quite well, miserable, and now happy; had two lovers who had been both jealous, and now both contented: I sat myself down by the one who seemed the least favoured, and, prompted by curiosity, endeavoured to turn the conversation upon the subject of the señorita's affections; nothing, however, could be gathered from him to explain the enigma. "I always loved her dearly", he remarked, "and wished to see her married to an *hombre de bien*" (honourable man); and he continued, in a confidential whisper, "the señor she is dancing with is a *free-*

mason." "What," said I, "and is he, therefore, not an honourable man?" He drew up his lips as if they had expressed more than he intended, and, striking off the ashes of his cigar with the little finger of the same hand in which he held it, took two reviving puffs, and muttered, *quien sabe!*

This expression, which literally means, "who knows!" is generally intended to convey the sense of "I don't know." As in the course of a person's travels, he seldom meets with any body who can give him any information on the subject of his inquiry, *quien sabe* is, nine times out of ten, the answer he receives to his interrogatories. It is, however, sometimes meant to express a doubt, the proportion of which is to be ascertained by the height of the shrug of the shoulders of the party speaking, also by the duration of the position: the head is thrown on one side, and the eyes cast obliquely downwards in the opposite direction: as the *quien sabe*, on this occasion, was expressed with all these ad-

junct qualifications, which were highly distinctive both as to manner and duration, it was evident that my proposition had, at least, the benefit of a very serious doubt, and that, in the estimation of my worthy companion, a freemason *might* be an honourable man.

I expected to dance the next waltz with our amiable little hostess, and was looking out for her, when the señor I had just left came up to offer me a partner, who, I found, was no other than the señorita with whom his rival had been dancing: there was so much of platonic liberality in the proposition that I could not refuse, and engaged myself for the following dance;—though girls in love are generally very stupid society for any body but their lovers;—a thousand little things may be said, with effect, and so as to amuse a partner not labouring under such prescriptive feelings:—it is an irksome task and requires laborious address, under such circumstances, to make yourself agreeable. Fortu-

nately for me, this was not the case, in the present instance: my partner, who was one of the prettiest in the room, was also an admirable dancer: she was lively and chatty: the delicacy of her situation appeared to have no effect upon her: she seemed as if she was, either, a stranger to the tender passion or in the habit of being perfectly familiarised with it: but, to speak fairly, neither one nor the other was the case; for, "Oh!" said she, in answer to some questions which I put to her, "I have been engaged these three years to Don Juan: and my *brother*, with whom you were talking, has only, this evening, withdrawn his dissent from our union"!

I have related this anecdote, because, trifling as it is, it may serve to exculpate the ladies of these countries, in some degree, from the opprobrium which has been so unreservedly thrown upon them. That they are fond of gallantry and are careless in the manner of evincing their disposition

towards it, there can be no doubt, but, there are in Guatemala, no less than in every other country, many who form exceptions to that rule, being, in spite of all appearances, both amiable and virtuous:—with a few false colourings and unwarrantable conclusions, what character can be safe? A prejudiced observer would have made an amusing story of our little Guatemalian Inamorata.

The party was now disposed in groups, playing guitars and singing in concert: they were seated on the benches round the room, whilst the supper was being laid: I sat next, at this repast, to a pretty young widow, who was sister of Don —— one of the late executive: she had just been married to a young man who had nothing but his personal accomplishments and character to recommend him: these were deemed satisfactory motives on the part of the lady, but not so with her family; who, from what I could find, had slighted her in consequence. She was, however, considered

as a lady of rank, and occupied a distinguished place amongst the guests: her domestic situation seemed, nevertheless, to occupy her thoughts, and she recounted to me the little projects which her husband and herself were planning for increasing their income: the principal of these was the cultivation of cochineal: with a capital of about 3000 dollars they had already planted 2000 nopals, which were to produce, after the first year, provided they did not meet with a bad season, an annual return, every year after, of the whole of their outlay. I sincerely wished her success in the operation, and have been glad to find, by inquiries which I afterwards made, that she was not *much* too sanguine in her calculations. Opposite to us sat a rich old Spaniard, who might have been about sixty-five years of age, and had just married, for his third wife, a girl of seventeen, who was amusing herself with the younger gallants at the bottom of the table: he had been very diligent at dinner in

carving the dishes; and it was amusing to observe the order and precision with which he had required they should each be, successively, handed round to the guests: he was equally diligent in the same employment during the supper, and went through it like a man of business: I understood he had been one all his life; he had now retired, and had transferred, it seems, his attentions from the counter to the table. Yet, the poor old gentleman had his troubles: he had not calculated, till after his marriage, that there was half a century betwixt his wife's age and his own.

CHAPTER XX.

Incidental Occurrences at the Antigua.—Return to the Capital.—Visit to the Theatre.

As my stay at the Antigua was drawing to a close, it was settled, before the party left, that we should, the next day, employ ourselves in visiting the more beautiful spots in the neighbourhood of the town: accordingly, by eight o'clock, the whole party were ready to set out: many of them were mounted in the double saddle: there was a mule caparisoned in this fashion which was intended for Doña Joanita and one of her servants. It being suggested to me that politeness required I should propose taking charge of her in the saddle, the offer was made and accepted, but not put into effect: her servant, having mounted my horse, found him so intractable, he was compelled to alight, leaving me to relinquish my proffered gallantry in his favour.

After proceeding about a mile and a half through the town and suburbs, we entered into some dark lanes so overshadowed with luxuriant foliage, that they hardly admitted of two persons riding a-breast: a mile farther on, just at the base of the Water Mountain, we came to a large building much shattered by the earthquakes, but exhibiting the remains of a palace, which indeed it formerly had been: it commanded a fine panoramic view of the city, and might be well worth repairing, if any of the "Incorrigibles" were hardy enough to undertake it. We passed a *rancheria*, or small farm, where they were preparing vaynilla, the substance which gives that fine flavour peculiar to Spanish chocolate: the pods of this plant, which are about the size of a child's finger, after having been exposed to the sun, and rubbed over with oil, were being made up into small parcels, covered over with plantain leaves. The plant itself resembles the vine, and climbs to the top of the highest trees: the flowers are

white, intermixed with red and yellow, and, when these fall off, the fruit succeeds in small green pods, in shape not unlike the plantain. The pods are at first green, then yellow and finally brown: they are gathered in the second state, before they begin to burst, and are then laid in small heaps, for two or three days, to ferment: they are afterwards exposed to the sun, being flattened with the hand and occasionally rubbed over with cocoa-, palm- or other oil. As moisture, heat, and shade are requisite for the production of vaynilla, the Antigua is well adapted for its cultivation; but the quantity made is very trifling; though it might become a lucrative article of exportation, and, I have no doubt, will be so, as soon as the commerce of the country is settled on a more solid basis.

We returned home to dinner about midday: I went into the kitchen to view the preparations, for the purpose of observing the style of cooking: the whole was effected by

charcoal stoves: there was no open fire place for roasting; and about half a dozen earthen pans with handles formed the whole Baterie de Cuisine. On the floor was lying a turkey as if it were in a fit; and another was standing over it evincing the greatest distress at its situation: I hardly ever remember having witnessed so much feeling in any animal as that exhibited in the action and manner of this disconsolate bird: its companion, which, it seems, had been dosed with brandy so as to stupify it, was destined to die under the paroxysms of intoxication, for the purpose of rendering its flesh immediately available for the table. I had always remarked, both here and at Mexico, that the turkeys were delicately tender: we all remember that Horace prescribes a little vinegar for the purpose, but, perhaps, the plan of deadly intoxication is not so generally known. A large apartment next to the kitchen was occupied by some female domestics who were assorting cochineal, and packing it in small

bags for market: the quantity was considerable, and might be worth from 4,000 to 5,000 dollars.

In the evening, I was applied to on the part of one of these damsels, for my medical assistance and advice. As I have somewhere before observed that it is useless for any Englishman to express his ignorance or incapacity, as the people will have you to be well acquainted with every thing relating to the healing art, I desired the patient to be introduced:—she was a bouncing young woman of about eighteen years of age, plump and rosy: her large dark-gray eyes were sparkling and animated, and she had altogether the appearance of vigorous health. As she came into the apartment, I was aroused from a half doze which I was taking on one of the two beds with which the room was furnished: the other had been occupied by Don José my companion; but he had finished his siesta and had gone:—when a man knows but little about a case, it is

difficult for him to judge of it, even when wide awake, and almost impossible that he should form any right notion of it when half asleep. Labouring, partly under both of these difficulties, I rubbed my eyes, and, fixing them on my patient, began seriously to consider what it was that she expected me to prescribe for her.

There are certain moments and situations in which the gravest man can scarcely refrain from lending his feelings to the excitement of whimsicality: his moodiness is taken by surprise, as a sudden ray of light invades a closed apartment; and he becomes abruptly cheerful, in spite of himself. I said I was much puzzled to guess what could possibly be the matter with the girl: she had the appearance of any thing but an invalid, and I was concerned to believe, as I was far from skilful in phlebotomy, that she was plethorick, and wanted bleeding: I was glad to find this was not the case, and that she had only the tooth-ache;—I say only, because I

have before alluded to an immediate and specific remedy for this excruciating complaint; which I applied successfully on the present occasion:—for the benefit of those so afflicted I will repeat more fully the manner of the application: the patient must lie down, with the head reclined on the side on which the pain is seated: the operator pours a little spirit, rum is the most approved, into the ear which lies uppermost: about a table-spoonful is sufficient, and it must be allowed to remain there till the pain is gone; which is generally the case in the course of three or four minutes: the sensation to the patient is by no means distressing: it resembles the whizzing experienced on the immersion of the head under water, but is much more astounding; and, I am not quite sure if, upon the only occasion on which I found it necessary to undergo the operation, it was not attended with a slight, though momentary, feeling of syncope: but, be this as it may, it is certainly not

dangerous, and, those who will submit to it, experience infallible relief.

I had called in the morning on Don Gregorio Salazar, the gefe politico of New Guatemala; and having collected from him, at this interview, some addition to the store of statistical information which I had already acquired respecting this part of the republic, I resolved upon accompanying Don José the next day, back to the metropolis. We had the pleasure of escorting Doña Maria, who was also returning to her mother at the Nueva.

We left the Antigua about eight o'clock, on one of the most beautiful mornings I ever witnessed. She was mounted on a double saddle, after the manner of the country, on an able mule, directed by a trusty servant of the family: the day soon became excessively hot, and, after having proceeded about two leagues, we halted to refresh ourselves at an Indian hut: detached from the regular dwelling was a small square apartment in which we, as

the visitors, were accommodated with our breakfast, a very good one, owing to the provident hospitality of our late hostess Doña Joanita. When we had done justice to it, Don José left us to take his siesta at a little distance, under a natural bower at the end of the garden, as our talking might disturb him;—for I was too gallant, myself, to think of going to sleep, and Doña Maria was polite enough to wave that ceremony, in spite of my offering to leave her the cabin for the purpose. The consequence was, that we continued chatting together very sociably till it was time to depart. I was glad to find that, although she had not slept, she was much refreshed by the rest; for she was of a delicate, sensitive constitution, and her servant had provided her with a temporary couch, which he had formed of his *manta* and other materials of dress and furniture peculiar to the equestrian equipments of the country. My *armas de agua*, spread upon the ground, furnished me with ade-

quate materials for recumbent repose. Opposite the door-way of this rural abode, for it had no windows, and at a small distance, was an orange tree, with its pearly flowers and golden fruit, sparkling in the midday sun, and beyond was a partial screen of olives, with their silvery foliage quivering in the light air: through the branches appeared the sky, like a blue, bright, mantle, without freckle or cloud, and the line of the distant Andes softly blended upon its edge, like some airy fringing of Nature's best workmanship. But it is impossible to describe the beauty and tranquillity of the scene, or the feelings with which I beheld it:—one thing I recollect was; that it seemed as though there were no living things in the creation but my companion and myself.

Those who have been accustomed to no other mode of travelling than that which is enjoyed by the rich and luxurious in England, who have their elliptical springs, their air, live-hair, or metallic squabs, their

minute-timed posters and Macadamized surfaces to guard them against the duly unpremeditated shock of a stone or of a moment's delay, can hardly appreciate the pleasure of a journey in which every twenty yards will offer some fresh difficulty to encounter. The road for about a league from the post we had left was of the latter description; but not one tenth part so bad as some tracts which I had passed in my journey from Mexico to Vera Cruz, and might be considered in the language of the country as, "corriente", or very tolerable.

I gave two rials, about a shilling, for a hat full of peaches, to some Indians who were carrying them to market, and found that I had paid considerably more than their value: they were pretty well flavoured, but by no means equal to the peaches cultivated in the common gardens of England, being more like apricots than peaches both in appearance and in taste. The delicious quality of what may be termed European fruits, found in these countries, has been

greatly overrated; at least it was never my lot to meet with any species of them equal in flavour to those which are brought to perfection in the old hemisphere by the effects of cultivation.

Having reached the capital about two o'clock, I went, in the evening, to see the chief school or university: the number of pupils was rather limited, not exceeding 300; but a great portion of the youth of the metropolis, as well as in the provinces, were instructed by private means: indeed, it will hardly be credited that the whole number of children receiving education in the public schools, did not amount, according to an official return, to more than 672. This deficiency had excited the attention of the government, who were looking out for a professor on the Lancastrian system: they were publishing a translation of the new method of studying the Latin language lately established in France: they had also proposed to the university to open a course of history after the method of M. Strass,

and had digested a plan for a new military college; having already established a mathematical academy, and opened a school for botany:—but what most seemed to deserve the attention of European and other nations was the charge which they had given to their agents in foreign countries to endeavour to form a scientific expedition, composed of astronomers, geographers, and naturalists "for the purpose", as they alleged, "of procuring more exact notices of the vast continent of which their republic is the CENTRAL portion."

Sunday, 26th June. In the course of this day, after the usual services of the church, there existed much bustling and visiting. Whilst I was sitting, in the evening, reading in my apartment, the Chinese, my servant, quietly entered, and deliberately took out all the chairs, helping himself to them one by one, leaving me no other than that which I occupied: he stood patiently behind me, when, annoyed by his intrusion, I arose from my seat, and he

immediately availed himself of the opportunity to seize that also. I looked out of the window, and saw two Indians laden with the furniture, hastening down the street. I was so predisposed in favour of this poor fellow, on account of his blunt honesty, that I seldom interfered with any thing he did, finding that it almost always contributed to my advantage and comfort; but, being doubtful as to the validity of these points, in the present instance, I called him to me, and asked him what he meant by it? "Coliseo, Señor, el coliseo:" "The play, Sir, the play," was his answer. The family were going to the play: this was all right; for the boxes of the theatre had no benches, and it was the custom of the parties who took them, to accommodate themselves with their own chairs. My good hostess had ordered her carriage, and, about five o'clock, we all set off together, a very merry party.

We had the stage box: the curtain was not drawn up, but the house was more than

half full. The orchestra was lighted with about two dozen candles, and there were nearly as many more separately affixed to the pillars which divided the lower tier of boxes. The deficiency was, however, compensated by some holes in the roof of the building, which admitted the daylight so profusely as to make the candles a work of supererogation.

The play was something about the "Glory of Independence", and abounded with allusions, which an English auditory would term "clap-traps." The acting was, however, equal to any I had seen at Mexico; and the audience, altogether, appeared to evince as much indifference to the pieces represented, as the best bred company in any European theatre could affect to do: I took suckets, as Johnson has it, with the young ladies, and was rather pleased, than otherwise, with the performance. We had also some glasses of champaign occasionally handed round to us, which excited, as I thought, the envy

of some gentlemen in the pit, who had been smoking incessantly, and might consequently be rather thirsty.

There was a scene, not badly drawn, representing the temple of the sun: one of the actors was describing the indestructible glory of Anahuac, and had just said that its brilliance should never be dimmed, when a tremendous shower, accompanied with thunder and lightning, took place. The rain dashed down in torrents on the crazy theatre, and spouted in volumes through the crevices of the broken roof: the audience were not to be affected by words; but, acknowledging that facts were stubborn things, mustered themselves indiscriminately in patches in the pit, or jumped into the boxes to escape the effects of the tornado. There is little encouragement given to plays at Guatemala; probably not more than was found in England previously to the time of Elizabeth.

I was glad to return from this scene of desolation; and, having, with my party,

regained the carriage, was conveyed home, hoping to enjoy the comforts of a good supper and all the indescribable et cæteras of an English fireside: but, in this, I was partly disappointed: a good supper, much better than play-goers generally have in England, was ready for us, but the et cæteras were sadly deficient. The *comedor*, or eating room, had two doors, one leading into a long passage communicating with the kitchen, and the other with the court-yard; I should have said door-ways, for there were doors to neither:—the inhabitants suffer so much, in general, from heat, that they never guard against the probability of cold or inclement weather, but rather court its influence as an agreeable exchange, and seem to "shiver with delight" whenever they feel it. Not being of this temperament, I had ordered the Chinese to suspend a curtain against the door-way which opened upon the court yard, and with many shrugs and misgivings, which were not equally participated by the rest of the com-

pany, despatched my meal, and, covering myself with three good English blankets, soon fell asleep;—caring little for the temple of the sun, nor having a reflection to spare on the indestructible glory of Anahuac.

CHAPTER XXI.

The Post-office.—State of Couriers.—Amusements.—Police.—Opinion on the lamentable fate of Mr. O'Reilley.

THE next day, the 27th June, I called on Don Antonio Batrez, the postmaster-general. He was living in one of the best buildings in the town: it constituted the office as well as his residence, and the apartments were handsome and well furnished: the floors were inlaid with marble, and covered, here and there, with a piece of mat or carpet: a large wardrobe or press, very bulky and glossy, and some cushioned benches, placed round the walls, in a sofa-like form, were the chief articles which the rooms contained.

There was no department of government business better managed, considering the state of affairs, than the system of the couriers. The mail was conveyed pretty

regularly not only to all parts of the republic, but even to Mexico. The courier averages from ten to twenty leagues a day, according to the seasons, which may be divided into two periods; the winter, or dry season, which commences about the end of November, and continues to the end of May; and the rainy season, which occupies nearly the other six months of the year: during the latter period, although the roads are almost impassable, the couriers still contrive to make their way, supplying themselves with fresh horses at the different stages; so that the post from the extremest points may be calculated on within three or four days of being due.

The greatest distance that the post travels from the capital to any place within the republic is to Cartago, the capital of Costa-Rica, namely, 397 leagues, or 992 miles: the distance to Mexico is 371 leagues, and to the nearest port in the South Sea 31 leagues: the distances to these and all the other principal places will be found

in the following pages*. The amount of leagues, divided by ten, will give a fair average of the number of days employed in travelling from the capital to the points alluded to: thus, the ordinary journey thence to Cartago, as performed by the courier, takes about thirty-nine days, and that to Mexico thirty-seven days: gentlemen travellers had better divide the distance by five, as they would most probably require double the number of days for performing the journey. It may be as well to mention that the distance from the capital to San Juan de Nicaragua, near to which it is proposed to open the canal into the South Sea, is 245 leagues, or 612 miles. The communication between the government and the federal states is made through the ordinary courier: I understood that these arrangements had been completely organized, and were in full force previous to my departure;

* See HISTORICAL AND STATISTICAL SKETCH, under the head of "Communication within itself and with the Exterior."

but, how far they may have been affected by the civil disturbances, which have unfortunately prevailed since that period, I cannot determine.

When tranquillity is again established, the above means of correspondence will be sufficient for carrying on the general routine of national or individual concerns, as far as regards mere communication; but there will be numerous difficulties to overcome, and many improvements to be adopted, before a commercial connexion upon a large and general scale can be established between the distant points of the republic. At present, the intercourse between the respective states possesses none of the facilities for a flourishing trade or even that interchange of commodities which their reciprocal wants would lead them to adopt. It is true that with regard to some European articles of dry goods, such as cutlery and broad cloth, the spirit of venture has induced the traders of the capital to send into the provinces, at stated seasons, assortments of such arti-

cles as may have remained on hand; and which are bought up greedily by the provincial shopkeepers.

Tuesday 28th.—This being a holyday, we again attended the theatre; not any thing occurred during the performance worth mentioning: the play exhibited many political allusions, breathing exalted notions of liberty and independence: the rain of course descended as usual, with periodical exactness; but not with that intensity which it did on the former evening of entertainment. There is about half a mile out of the town, a *plaza de toros*, or theatre for bull-fights: it was now closed, as the sports always take place in the afternoon, and this being the wet season, they were here suspended, in the same manner as in Mexico, until the dry weather should set in: the boxes are covered with a slight wooden roof, sufficient to afford a shade from the sun, but very penetrable by the wet, and the lower circles being completely exposed both to one and the other,

the amusement is very properly adjourned until a more convenient season: accordingly, there was no bull-fight during my residence in the capital. This and the theatre are the only two public amusements which the place affords; but the deficiency is made up by the pic-nic or gipsying parties which I have before described: besides these, were occasionally little *tertullas*, or evening assemblies, enlivened with dancing and music, but rarely with any expensive collation: the enjoyment of life seemed to consist rather in its indolence than exertion, in its ease than in its pomp; not but what there were to be found, even amongst this primitive people, some of those affectations to preeminence, those exacerbations of jealousy and those flutterings of vanity which force themselves into society, throughout every situation of life;—tarnishing the brightest blossoms of existence. But nature feels no distinctions: the blight will affect the regal lily no less than the humble

cowslip;—as passion gnaws the bosom, alike, of the peasant or the princess.

The only wine that was worth drinking in the town was some champaign which was sold by some French merchants, who had established themselves here with an assorted cargo of goods, consisting of this beverage, china vases, very splendid, together with tea sets, writing desks, ladies' dressing cases, and other countless articles of nicknackery; not to mention pickles, fish sauces, patent mustard, and other gastronomic delicacies. My servant had been out to purchase, amongst some of the latter articles, two dozen of champaign; the price was eighteen dollars or seventy-two shillings a dozen, which he had paid, having hired a man in the Grand Plaza to bring the whole home; but, unfortunately, he lost sight of him in the crowd, which was considerable, as it was market day; and, after many ineffectual endeavours to discover the porter, we were obliged to submit to the loss of the champaign.

He had, foolishly, employed one of the *leperos*, or established beggars of the place; and I mention this circumstance, because it was the only piece of dishonesty which I had witnessed or even heard of during my whole stay, and throughout my travels, in Guatemala.

These *leperos* consist of the most abandoned of human beings: they are far from numerous, and being so well known as they are seen standing, even in midday, at the corners of the streets, with their large slouched hats and a tattered blanket which serves them for all the purposes of dress and couch, it is only wonderful that the government has not taken the precaution of removing them, or providing for their maintenance by hard labour or some other equally efficacious, expurgatory, system. This reminds me that, on the first night of my arrival, when I went out to pay a visit with Don Simon, he cautioned me against these miscreants, providing himself with his *maschete*, or cut and thrust sword,

and advising me to take my pistols with me. I naturally fell into his suggestions, and generally continued to practise them; it having been our uniform custom, at Mexico, never to be out, unarmed, after dark.

I found, in the course of my travels, that it was always prudent to manifest a firm intention of self-preservation: this should, however, be done with an air of indifference, as if the shooting an aggressor was a matter-of-course business: the facility and precision with which it might be effected it is prudent frequently to show by shooting at a mark in the presence of your native servants, loiterers, and other hangers-on, in the different places where you happen to take up your abode: to this practice may be ascribed the happy result that I was never, in my own defence, once obliged to pull a trigger; although I had nothing else, in very many awkward situations, to rely upon for my protection, had I been attacked.

I know not whether poor Mr. O'Reilley*, who, it is well known, was murdered in his bed by his own servant, had been in the habit of sleeping with arms: one thing I apprehend is, that he did not take the necessary precaution of fastening his door: a slight bolt or the appearance of the least probability of resistance might, possibly, have saved his life; for the gradation betwixt temptation to crime and its commission is, unfortunately, too well known, so small, that, with persons of abandoned habits, they are seldom unconnected.

I am far from wishing to moralize on the execrable act to which I have alluded: my motive is to guard others from the possibility of exposing themselves to so dreadful a catastrophe: another suggestion which I would wish to offer is, that the act itself ought not, in fairness, to be argued as a proof of the general outrageous state of society amongst the people where it was perpetrated: less temptations, whether arising

* His Majesty's late Consul.

from avarice or revenge, have led to equally deplorable consequences, in the most civilized portions of the world. But, whether this horrible event arose from private or political causes, its fatal effects to the unfortunate individual and his agonized relatives render it alike incapable of mitigation or distinction: it makes no difference to the parties whether a man be gathered up to his ancestors by the assassin's dagger, the pestilence of climate, a musket-ball or twenty-four pounder;—but to die in the public service, in whatever mode death may be encountered, claims something more than the solitary tribute of domestic regret.

Of those who have been employed in the business of "the Recognition of the New Republics of South America," how many have fallen victims to the duties which they had to fulfil! The journals that have been written by disinterested parties will show the labours and fatigues which they had to encounter, in the mere process of locomotion, to say nothing of

the dangers of climate and the obnoxiousness to party revenge*.—I should be sorry to seem jocose on so serious a subject; but have often considered that the business required by ambassadors to these states has formed a new æra in diplomacy: they are obliged to evince, equally, physical and mental exertion;—to combine the activity of the courier with the sedateness of the statesman;—they should possess expansiveness of mind with solidity of occiput, a pliancy of character with obduracy of epidermis, and a delicacy of sensibility with a stomach for the black vomit.

* Out of the number of persons officially deputed by Government to visit these countries, eleven, at least, have either fallen victims to the climate or been carried off by violent deaths.

CHAPTER XXII.

Revisit the President.—Difficulty of returning to England.—Principal families of fortune.—Impediment to relations with Great Britain.—Guatemalian Ladies.—Don José de Valle.—The Archbishop.—Party feeling.

I REPEATED a visit this day to the president: he kindly informed me that he had ordered communications to be sent to the different departments to furnish as speedily as possible the information which I had previously solicited. My departure was arranged for the middle of next month, because I wished to avail myself of a passage home in one of the mercantile vessels which sail, with convoy from Belize, on the 1st of August.

I had heard that proceeding through the Gulf of Florida in a single vessel was, at this time, almost certain exposition to piracy of the most sanguinary nature, and as the journey to the coast would be almost

impracticable if I delayed it till later in the season, there was little choice left between returning immediately or remaining in the country until the end of the year. The political state of affairs was at that moment every thing that could be deemed favourable; I was, therefore, induced to adopt the former resolution, and all my arrangements were made accordingly.

In looking over the information I had acquired, I was led to consider the nature and pretensions of the more influential, I mean the richer, classes of society; and having, casually, heard in conversation the ascribed amount of property and fortune which some of them possessed, I took great pains to ascertain the respective interests and fortunes of the rest. For this purpose I made a vocabulary of the names of the leading families in the country; and, after collecting the opinions of persons best informed upon the subject, annexed a statement of their respective properties, the nature of them, and the sources whence they

were derived. This statement will be found in the Appendix, but, from evident motives of delicacy and prudence, I have here given only the initial and bout-rimé of their several names.

By this document it should appear that the trading capital in the power of thirty-seven families alone, residing in the city, for they are all of them more or less engaged in trade, amounts to upwards of £1,500,000 sterling:—this, it should be observed, is without taking into consideration the value of the trading capital of the other cities and towns of the republic, in which are some families equal in wealth to those in the metropolis. I had no means of ascertaining the extent of such property, but, assuming that in each of the four other states of the federation the amount of the trading capital may be one quarter of that of the metropolis, there would be applicable directly or indirectly to the purposes of foreign trade upwards of £3,000,000 sterling. This capital merely wants to be

brought into action with foreign trade to render it really useful to its possessors and those countries which might traffick with them. Why has this not been effected? In my humble opinion, the reason is this. The chief country to which the Guatemalian government anxiously looked for the recognition of their independence was Great Britain, where their minister not having been received as such, all their overtures for a treaty were suspended,—and what was the consequence? A restless spirit of domestic ambition, which had lain dormant under the thraldom of the gorgeous newly-created dignity then threatening to overwhelm it, burst suddenly into a flame;—the president and his party were attacked, and a civil war ensued. In this country, (Guatemala,) a little tact on the part of a diplomatic agent from any authoritative power might, probably, at this moment, have quelled the confusion. This, however, is only an humble opinion, though the result of sincere conviction, and, I trust, cannot prove a cause of

offence to those numerous parties in Guatemala which the delicacy of its subject so essentially involves. One thing is quite certain, that up to the first eight months after my arrival with my Report, the independence of Guatemala could not possibly have been acknowledged by Great Britain, owing to some insurmountable difficulties of an important and confidential nature which happened to occur; and the subsequent information received of the disorganized state of affairs would, under existing circumstances, have rendered further inclination to treat, on the part of the British government, to say the least, very unadviseable. Not the slightest blame can therefore be attached to this country for the unfortunate delay; and, if the result has proved calamitous to that republic, it is to be hoped that a reciprocity of amicable intentions may again arise, when circumstances shall make it appear that she is entitled to that consideration on the part of Great Britain which she, at first, so zealously coveted,

and, it is to be expected, she may have the good sense yet to desire.

Saturday, 2d July. Having spent the last four days, which were very rainy, in compiling and arranging the information for my report, I dined the next day, Sunday, with Don Mariano Aycenena, the brother of the marquess. I had here an opportunity of seeing an entertainment in the best Guatemalian style. His lady and two other young females, his cousins, ornamented and enlivened the party, which, however, broke up about six o'clock; when most of them retired to take, as I presumed, their siesta, of which, by the duration of the dinner and the circumstance of the hour having been fixed somewhat later than usual, they had been, unfortunately, deprived. The Miss Piñols, the young ladies alluded to, are of the fairest complexion, and most like English women, in the general character of their persons, of any females I have seen in those countries: there are other young ladies of the family,

the Pavones, also extremely handsome and European-looking: before I left, they had all acquired the title of "the Inglesas," or English girls, with which they seemed to be very much pleased. In making these particular remarks, I do not wish it to be understood that the ladies here mentioned comprise the only beauties in this place: there are many others who ought to be named, if I were making a register of them; but this would be foolish, and it is therefore only necessary to observe, that the greatest portion of the Guatemalian women might be esteemed handsome in any part of the world.

Monday, 4th July. Called on Valle for explanations with regard to some points relating to commercial and statistical subjects treated upon in the last report of the Board of Trade drawn up by the late Spanish authorities. It is a useful document, as it shows what will probably be the value of the trade of the republic after it is settled down and quiescently established.

On the next day, the 5th, poor Beteta, the minister of finance, (he is since dead,) gave me the report of the Commission, appointed by the president, on the state of the existing trade. I was also occupied, on this day, in engaging mules for my journey: the *Arriero* wanted the whole of the money in advance. I agreed for ten mules at sixteen dollars each, and got him to consent to take only one hundred dollars in advance; wishing to retain some security for the proper performance of his engagement; but in this intention I was mistaken, for he called two days afterwards, and, with some little parleying, gave me to understand that if I did not immediately pay him the difference of sixty dollars, he would not let me have the mules at all: I, of course, had no choice but to assent, and became contented on finding it was the usual custom of the muleteers to receive the money in advance: I can only say that, although they thus get the whip hand of their customers, they seldom abuse their privilege.

Saturday, 9th July. Being anxious to procure a chart of the divisions of the Five States as newly established, I called on Valle, he being the most likely person to assist my views; in this, however, I was not a little disappointed: it is true that the demarcation had been determined by legislative enactment, but no map had yet been formed to illustrate the new arrangement. We accordingly took one of Arrowsmith's maps which I had brought with me, and pencilled out the divisions in question.*

Sunday, 10th. Took leave of the archbishop, who kindly gave me a general letter of recommendation to the hospitality and good services of the curates through whose settlements I might pass. I shall never forget the kindness shewn me by this worthy prelate. Although I had been nearly obliged, so warm was his invitation, to take up my abode with him, I regret to say that I had only seen him three times during my stay in the capital. On taking

* See the Map facing the Title.

my leave of him, he good naturedly wished me a prosperous journey to England, and a speedy safe one back again to Guatemala.

I then adjourned to the palace to take formal leave of the president. I could see that he was anxious to discover what was my general impression, that is, whether favourable or not, with regard to the state of the republic. The only subject on which it was reasonable to entertain any doubts upon this point, was that relating to San Salvador, in which State some difficulties had arisen with regard to the appointment of a bishop. The people of San Salvador, conceiving it necessary to establish a bishoprick, had appointed, without the archbishop's consent, the Father Delgado to that function: the archbishop having denied his sanction, and having, in fact, refused to ordain him, the matter was referred to the ecclesiastical Cabildo, who reported that the appointment was not lawful. The matter being then dis-

cussed by the Congress, it was agreed that it should await the decision of the Papal See. Such was the state of the business when I left the country; nor should I have attached to it any importance had I not understood that the difficulty in question in some measure affected the president, inasmuch as he had been thought to have sided with the Delgado party against that of the ecclesiastics in general.

Be this as it might, the disturbances which have since agitated the country are chiefly ascribable to the facts alluded to; and I have mentioned them, on this occasion, because they appeared to me, upon my leaving the capital, to be the only subject on which a difference of opinion might be said to exist. The jealousy of the president's power and of his adherents, which included the majority of the most ancient and respectable families, was publicly admitted, but then the leaders of the opposite party talked so much about liberality and love of country, and in fact had ventured,

up to that period, to make so little show of their hostility, that no bad result could fairly be anticipated from it; besides which, the alliance which the government fondly expected it was about to make seemed to secure its protection against any dangerous attack from internal enemies, who had not yet dared openly to declare themselves.

The president took some pains to satisfy me that the differences respecting the ecclesiastics of San Salvador and the Cabildo of the capital were not likely to produce any consequences destructive to the public harmony: he had, on a previous occasion, condescended to ask my opinion on the propriety of sending a minister to Great Britain, and now seemed resolved to come to a final determination with regard to this subject, on the present occasion: negotiations of so important a nature, I felt aware, it was not in my province to enter upon, and the friendly overtures were, accordingly, suppressed *in limine*. Valle had been offer-

ed the appointment, but had declined it, upon the principle, as he told me, " that he could be more useful to his country at home." This observation, I must do him the justice to say, was elicited in answer to one which I quoted from his own writings, extolling " the *abandonment* of *self* for devotion to the *public good*," and insisting that he ought, therefore, to accept the appointment. He remained at home, and future historians will have to discriminate how far, by so doing, he has been useful to his country. I believe him to be sincerely devoted to its interests upon that principle of *self abandonment* on which he has acted, and have only to hope that, for the sake of the *public good*, he will not in future refuse any situation which may be offered him, even should it be the president's chair.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Preparations for departure.—Provide a companion or attaché.—Leave the Capital.

THE gefe politico of the new town of Guatemala, Don Gregorio Salazar, this day, returned the visit I had made him at the Antigua. The next, for I determined to set off for the coast on the following, was spent in preparations for my departure: in the midst of these, it had never occurred to me before, that I was about to make an arduous journey and perhaps difficult voyage without a single attendant; and in justice to the nature of my employment, began to look out seriously for some respectable person to accompany me, who might take care of my despatches in case of any unforeseen accident or casualty occurring.

There had been domesticated in the family for the last fortnight a young man

about nineteen years of age, by name Don Eugenio: he was the youngest son of Doña Vicente, my very kind and hospitable friend: he had just returned from San Blas, where he had been on a visit, of commercial enterprise on his mother's account, to his eldest brother, the director of the customs under the Mexican government. The latter had accompanied Eugenio to Guatemala, and having ascertained that the youth was intended for a mercantile life, it occurred to me that, by taking him to England, I might benefit him as well as myself by his companionship in my travels; for he had twice passed the port of Izabal, and was in every respect an intelligent, active, youth.

The proposition to take him with me was received with great gratitude by his mother and the rest of the family, which was now augmented by the late arrival of Doña Gertrudis, the Penelope of Sonsonate; for although her brothers had both returned, her husband still remained at the port which

they had just left;—and my offer being accepted, it was found necessary for me to delay another day in order that the necessary preparations for the youth's departure might be made: these were easily effected, for in every house of any degree of respectability there are seamstresses almost constantly employed. They are usually seated in a row on the floor of the inner colonnade of the building: three or four extra hands had been for some days engaged in order to make me specimens of some of the more curious embroideries and artificial ornamental works peculiar to the country; amongst the latter of which were little birds, monkeys, and other animals beautifully and naturally imitated in silk. In order to get ready the supply of clothing thought necessary for my companion, about half a dozen more hands were added to this list of native spinsters, and the whole group presented a very novel and curious appearance: added to this, all the other domestics, with many who had been

called in to help them, were diligently employed in preparations for the journey: some were making wholesale supplies of chocolate, others dulces or sweetmeats, or cooking provisions, such as fowls, tongues, and hams: these were stowed away in two large baskets; the interstices of which were filled up with new rolls, a whole batch of which had been baked for the occasion. In the inner yard, the male servants were busied in preparing the saddles and mule furniture: the latter lay in a large heap, appearing of itself to be a sufficient load for all the poor animals, without the addition of the cumbrous weights which they were doomed also to bear. In looking over my packages which had now been assorted into mule-loads, it was discovered that at least six more mules would be necessary for their conveyance.

On leaving Mexico, I had disburthened myself of every thing which might not be absolutely requisite for my wants: clothing of every kind, which had been worn,

I had either distributed amongst my servants, or given to Mexican friends, who esteemed them highly for their make and quality, but more, perhaps, on account of their being in both respects genuine English. The only article which I really felt the loss of was an English saddle, the last I had remaining, but which I presented, on the evening of my departure from that capital, to my esteemed friend Don Domingo Saviñon, who, it will be remembered, accompanied me on my first journey from San Cosme. He had some months previously enforced my acceptance of a beautiful horse, merely because I happened to admire it, whilst riding with him, and I believe would have willingly given me the choice of another of his best animals for the trifling remembrance which I left him on that occasion. I was glad he appeared so gratified with my little gift, though I am sure it is the last time I shall ever leave myself so unprovided when undertaking an equestrian journey of a thousand miles.

I say that I had not any thing superfluous about me, travelling as lightly as could be possibly managed: the following was the arrangement of my baggage. For the beds of myself and attendants three mules; for provisions, cooking apparatus and utensils four, for attendants to ride three, in all ten; and the remaining six for baggage made up the sixteen. Indeed four were sufficient for my baggage, but I wished to have two sumpters, in case of accident, —a provident arrangement which every traveller should adopt, to insure the end of his journey at a given time,—the omission of which may subject him to great delay, and ultimately to more expense than the whole first hire of his retinue.

Tuesday, 12th July. The bustle occasioned by my departure was increased on this day by the circumstance being known that Don Eugenio was to accompany me. Many of the most respectable inhabitants came to take leave of him, and to congratulate the poor lad, (I am sure I know

not why,) on his good fortune. The anxious mother invited them all to a grand entertainment in the evening; the additional preparations for which increased the occupations of the domestics who were already all fully employed. I ordered a fresh quantity of champaign to do honour to the occasion: it arrived safely at the house, but although it did not disappear in the unwelcome manner as did a former lot, it underwent a very unpleasant transmigration;—for it was almost all of it made up into very sweet punch. The supper was profuse and excellent: about seventy persons sat down in the *comedor*, which was as many as could be accommodated, and the rest, consisting of all the young people, had formed themselves into groups on the floors of the other apartments, where they regaled themselves in gipsy fashion. The shouts of laughter and merriment ill accorded with the state dignity of the grand supper table. I was unfortunately placed at the head of it, and had

to do the *aimable* with jewelled dowagers and men of *consideration:*—Colman, I think, says it is dull though very dignified to sit under laurels; and I confess, I would willingly have exchanged my position for a chance-seat in any of the other apartments. I had promised myself a very pleasant evening, but found it a very dull one.

When the company had retired, about one o'clock in the morning, an hour unprecedentedly late for Guatemalian festivities, I took the liberty of complaining to one of the companions of my little friend, Doña Maria, that she had made a very unpleasant division of the company, by taking all the cheerful portion of it to herself; when she playfully replied that she presumed Doña Maria thought that she and her companions would have been awed by the presence of a Gran Señor.

By six o'clock the next morning I was awakened with a noise occasioned by the arrieros who were engaged in loading the

mules: I saw the long spare figure of the Chinese standing in the door-way, as motionless as an image: he was waiting for me to awake; for, having been all his life servant to old Spaniards, he was fearful of disturbing my rest: he stood vacant and fixed as the meridian of Greenwich, and as undefinable as its longitude: — I considered him as the point of my departure, and immediately arose, being anxious about the nature of my unknown journey and the dispositions necessary for making it practicable.

About nine o'clock, four of the mules were loaded, and every thing seemed in a state of readiness for departure except my servant. The cool rainy nights which we had experienced for the last three weeks had greatly deranged his feelings of comfort: he had never existed except upon the eastern coasts of China and the western of Mexico; and had never enjoyed his health so well as at Acapulco. The climate of Guatemala, at this season, was almost death

to him, for the thermometer seldom stood higher in the night than at 88°. The poor fellow had weighed all these circumstances in his mind, and felt them in his body; and, with some hesitation, entreated me not to take him to any place colder than Guatemala. Upon my insisting that I would take him with me to England, his copper face turned pale, and he cut short all nicer discussion by assuring me—he would never go there. I was obliged to be content with availing myself of his services to the coast, to which he had no objection, and, in the course of ten minutes, he was ready for the expedition.

He had a great contempt for dress of any kind, and, on this occasion, in addition to the cotton drawers and shirt which usually formed the whole of his apparel, he had loaded his person with a pair of laced Wellingtons and thin sky-blue cotton Wellington overalls. He had usually worn a very narrow brimmed old English hat, which had completely lost the nap but re-

tained the felt; allowing him to feel, what he so much enjoyed, the full influence of the sun. I had purchased a Guayaquil hat made of a fine elastic reed peculiar to that country, as fine as, and much more durable than, Leghorn, and consequently gave him a straw one which I had purchased at Madeira, very light and about seven inches in the brim. He considered for a minute what he should do; and looking at his old companion with a sort of scrutinizing affection, jerked it suddenly away, and, then, deliberately adopting its successor, with its flimsy pretensions to such capital preferment, completed his costume.

The anxious moment of departure was now arrived: the last mules were tramping slowly but steadily through the gateway, without hoot or encouragement, but following instinctively their companions and the sound of the little bell suspended to the neck of their leader.

Don Eugenio had received the reiterated blessings and repeated embraces of his mo-

ther and sisters, and was already mounted for the journey: I had also taken my leave of this hospitable family; and was proceeding through the gateway, when I had another object, unexpectedly, to encounter. It was Doña Maria standing on the side of the porch with her head erect, her arms extended, her eyes streaming with tears; and, as her hair, half dishevelled, flowed down unconfined over her neck and shoulders, she seemed some half-animated portrait of the Maria Dolorosa, with which the churches and houses of these countries are so usually adorned. No words of consolation which I ventured to offer could rouse her from the stupor in which her grief had plunged her: to all my observations she indistinctly muttered, "Mi hermano" (my brother). She was still motionless; the scene was become too distressing to witness, and I hastened through the porch: I proceeded slowly along the street: the house extended for a considerable distance down it: there were five windows in the front, and as I passed

the last, which was my bed-room, and the shutters of which were open, I looked into it, and my sight was again distressed with the figure of the poor girl, in the same attitude, and exclaiming as I slowly moved along, "Mi hermano." Contrasting her appearance with that which it exhibited the preceding evening when her life and animation had given increased radiance to the enjoyment she was sharing with her youthful companions, I could not help considering the instability of human happiness, and sincerely sympathized in her present distress.

As I passed through the Grand Plaza, I met the archbishop, who was taking an airing in his carriage: he never, I believe, went abroad on foot, and although he is allowed to be a firm advocate of the independent cause, I could not help thinking that he exhibited, in this instance, as it were, a detached remnant of the exclusive dignity of the party which he had renounced.

As I was quite alone, I hardly knew my route out of the town, but guessed it by the position of the sun as well as by the appearance of the surrounding country, which I had often contemplated from the azotea, or roof of the house in which I resided. Having never before passed this way, I was agreeably surprised in coming out upon a cheerful little hamlet, consisting of a few cottages, on a lively green skirted on two sides with level but unworn roads, the whole being hemmed in with uncouth gates and fences, and sheltered with fine trees, amongst which the orange offered at once its refreshment and its shade: pigs, children, and geese were squatted upon the sward: a cow and an ass stood under the shade of one of the largest trees, gazing at each other as if in mute admiration or in tranquil enticement of the pencil of a Morland. The scene reminded me of the village greens which, when a boy, I had seen in England in the environs of its metropolis, but which are now involved in

another Babylonian, but splendid and happy, captivity.

Having given the rein to my little Arabian, I came up, in the course of ten minutes, with the stragglers of my party. The first whom I encountered was Don Domingo, the eldest brother of my attaché, Don Eugenio. He had been loitering behind in order to talk to me about his views regarding this young man, who was the *cadet* (the youngest son) of the family. His father, I knew, had been one of the old Spanish descent, and had married a Guatemalian lady, Doña Vicente, whose relatives had accumulated considerable wealth in *haciendas*, or farming estates, in which they bred innumerable droves of mules, which, being employed in the carrying trade, had greatly enriched the family, in addition to the fortune which, by his exclusive privileges as a trader, the father, as an old Spaniard, had obtained. Although Don Domingo was the head of the family, yet, owing to the effects of the civil disturb-

ances, which had destroyed the ancient privileges of his house, he had accepted of a situation as comptroller of the customs under the Mexican Government at San Blas: he was, consequently, well aware of the more solid advantages of trade; and the summit of his wishes was that I would place his brother in some respectable mercantile house in England, in order that he might afterwards conduct the affairs of his family at home, and take advantage of such connexions as his residence in England, and his knowledge of European business, might possibly afford.

About four o'clock in the evening, he took leave of me, to return to the capital: like his amiable little sister, Doña Maria, he tried, upon this occasion, to give utterance to his feelings; but nature predominated even in the rougher sex, and all he could say, as he unconsciously acceded to the irritability of his mule which seemed to have partaken of his excitement and was moving onwards, was, "Mi hermanito" (my

youngest brother).—I came up with my Chinese servant; but hardly knew him, for he had taken off his hat, which he had slung behind him to the saddle, and had tied a handkerchief round his head in its stead: the sun was setting, and he probably wished to enjoy the last influence of its rays.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Description of the Route.—Fall in with Don Francisco Salazar.—Hacienda, or farm, of Morales.

After the first half hour's ride, the road became steep and craggy: by winding up a shoulder of a mountain, we had attained an elevation of about 800 feet: we passed round a projecting point which afforded a delightful view of the whole town as well as of the surrounding country; and, although we might have been two hours in reaching it, the distance of the city from it did not appear more than two miles, as the crow flies. Of course we could see very distinctly all the separate streets and churches, and by the position of the latter my eye seemed as though it was enabled to discover the exact spot of the hospitable mansion I had left.

The town was environed on the three

nearest sides with abundance of foliage, and the farthest quarter swept off into the undulating plains over which I had passed on entering it on my journey from Sonsonate. The present view was preferable to the former, as it was more distinct and comprehensive. The *yeco*, or white cement, with which all the buildings are covered, when not composed of stone, gave them a lively and neat appearance, and sparkling in the sun, contrasted boldly with the leafy verdure of the surrounding scene. From this point the road turns abruptly from the town, which is no more to be seen upon the journey: on the left, as we proceeded, were appearances of considerable cultivation, as also, a little farther on, to the right; but, as we advanced, they were no longer to be found, and the country put on a more rugged and uncouth appearance: I remember comparing it, in my imagination, to a Brobdignag's ploughed field and ourselves to Gulliverians working our way through the clods, which the broken hills, now forming

the whole face of the country, would seem to represent.

About five o'clock a mizzling rain came on which induced me to cover myself with an oil-skin cloak which I had brought from Mexico, and found very useful in my several excursions since the rainy season had begun to set in. It was manufactured of very thin silk, and consequently extremely light and compact; it cost me an ounce (£3 17*s.*) of gold, but was the cheapest thing, in reference to its utility, of any which I had purchased for my journey.

After riding through the rain for an hour, we came to a small open plain, on the right of which stood two or three cottages in a yard inclosed with an ordinary rustic fence. On one side, was the principal of these tenements, with an open viranda supported by two wooden pillars: it was already occupied by a bed on which a traveller newly arrived was reclining whilst his servant was preparing him some chocolate. I dismounted, was cold, wet, and

hungry, and began to wonder where I should find some accommodation, when Don Francisco Salazar, (this was the stranger's name,) politely offered me a seat on his bed, and also insisted on dividing with me the chocolate which had been prepared for him. A dish of fowl admirably dressed with the green Chile sauce succeeded, and with some wine and brandy, also the produce of his canteen, we made a comfortable meal. About eight o'clock my baggage appeared: the bedstead, although it had been packed in a large leather case made for the purpose, had become wet: the wood had swollen, and would not pass the seams of the leather stretchers, which was a part of a complicated process necessary for its erection.

Having invariably experienced fine weather to Acapulco, I had never wanted this bungling specimen of Mexican upholstery, and now I really did require it, found it perfectly unadapted to the purposes for which it was intended. Don Eugenio kindly insisted

on my taking his bedstead, which he assisted in putting up, and contented himself with the piece of ticking which was to be united to the stands and stretchers to form my clumsy couch. The air was cold and damp, and having partially defended ourselves from the rain by suspending a mat to the weather-side of the portico, we slept pretty comfortably till six o'clock the next morning; when we renewed our journey.

The gentleman, to whom I had been indebted for such well-timed hospitality on the preceding evening, was the younger brother of Don Gregorio Salazar, the gefe politico, and I continued to find that I had made a great acquisition in so respectable a travelling companion. He was going to Belize on commercial business. He might be about twenty years of age, was tall, manly and very sedate: all his movements were like clock work; his words were also regulated by the utmost precision and decorum: he spoke little, but what he did say was uttered with such affability and kindness,

and always so much to the purpose, as to make one regret he was not naturally more sociable and communicative: he was in fact a gentlemanly, shy man.

We had, yesterday, travelled nine leagues, and the present day, the 14th, about six, reached Omohita, which is the respectable hacienda, or farming establishment, of Doña Morales: here we of course remained the night, making up our beds in the large hall, after supper had been removed, and to which the whole of the inmates of the farm-house, from the mistress to the upper servants, had in succession sat down. Against one of the doors of this hall was suspended an almanack whereon was printed, as memoranda, the leading events of the Guatemalian revolution, and also a compendious abstract of the periods of emancipation of all the separate republics of the New World: as I had not seen the document before, I transcribed it, as follows:—

TABLE OF THE CONQUEST AND LIBERTY OF AMERICA.

Names of the States.	Years of Conquest.	Days of declaring Liberty.	Duration of Slavery.
Venezuela	1526	19 April, 1810	283
Buenos Ayres ..	1516	25 May —	293
Santa Fe	1538	20 July —	271
Cartagena	1520	18 August —	189
Chile	1535	18 Sept. —	274
Peru	1531	15 July, 1821	289
Mexico	1520	24 August —	300
Guatemala	1524	15 Sept. —	297
Panama	1518	28 Nov. —	302

Two things appear remarkable in this statement; one that so many of these countries should have renounced their allegiance to Spain in two different periods as it were by a simultaneous movement, and the other is the tone of feeling the document itself expresses and is so calculated to inculcate, ascribing to the period of the Spanish dominion the opprobrious term of the "Duration of Slavery." A document of this sort exhibited in the eating-room of the haciendas of any country in South America is sufficient of itself to revolutionize any given portion of it: it cannot, of

course, be suspended there without the approbation of the parish curate, who is, in nine cases out of ten, liable also to be the interpreter of its meaning.

About two leagues before we came to the hacienda, on passing through a beautiful wood of stately trees, I espied, by the road side, a small log, freshly trimmed and rounded with the hatchet, about a yard long, and a foot diameter. Concluding that it had been inadvertently left in this out-of-the-way place, I dismounted to recognize it: the grain was so hard and close as to resist all efforts of my penknife, which might as well have endeavoured to make an impression on iron. It was very dark coloured, but fancifully streaked and variegated, and, considering that it might make very nice despatch boxes, I was determined to bring it home by way of a specimen of the fine wood with which the country abounds, and to present samples of it to the Foreign Office. I told Don Eugenio I should like very much to take

this piece of wood with me to England, and he obligingly offered to convey it for me on his own mule, and to walk, himself, to the resting place to which we were going. With exceedingly great difficulty we raised it upon the mule, and with still greater contrived to bring it to the hacienda. Once or twice we were about to abandon the project, for, not having the proper requisites for making it fast, it rolled about upon the back of the poor animal, which seemed even more inclined to part with it than ourselves.

The next morning, when we were on the point of starting, the bailiff informed me that he was sorry I had taken the trouble to bring home the log: it was the property of Señora Morales, but had been found too heavy to bring away without a sledge. Having told him that I had conveyed it for myself, he retired to consult with the hostess, and informed me the price of it was eight dollars. It was intended for a crushing roller of one of the mills which

were at work on the premises:—it had arrived at its right destination, and I was glad to get rid of it upon so plausible a pretext.

Previously to my quitting the capital, I had been recommended by Don José de Valle to take with me specimens of the different woods of the country: I had accordingly ordered to be made a despatch box inlaid with all these several specimens, which amounted to thirty-seven; but the cabinet-maker was engaged in building a new pulpit, and could not execute my wishes within the time of my departure:—it was the recollection of that disappointment which had resolved me to meddle with this wholesale article in the cabinet line.

CHAPTER XXV.

Hear of Arrival of a British Consul.—Perilous Situation in fording the River between Omohita and Guastatoia.

FRIDAY, the 11th. Two leagues from Guastatoia, which is ten from Omohita, we met a Spaniard travelling from the coast, by name Señor Valdero, informing us that a British ship of war was arrived at Belize, bringing a consul from his majesty's government, and also three commissioners and a secretary. The information was to me of a very startling nature, and, after my friends had taken leave of the Señor, I rode back about half a league with him, in order to elicit, if possible, something more particular respecting the objects of that Commission; for I was apprehensive, and not without good reason, from his assertions, that the purport of my own had been

thus entirely superseded, and that, too, for some cause altogether inexplicable to myself. I left him on coming to the banks of a rapid river which I had with difficulty forded a short time before I first met him, and now turned back to join my companions who were far a-head.

Revolving, however, in my mind this mysterious circumstance, and reflecting upon the agitated state of affairs between the people of Belize and the Guatemalian government, on account of the desertion of the slaves of British proprietors into the Republican territory; and finding that Señor Valdero was conveying letters to Mr. Bayley which might throw some light on these interesting subjects, I turned back once more to overtake him, and to request Mr. Bayley would despatch to me an *extraordinario* with any news which, by his letters, he might have had communicated to him from England, as well upon these as any other subjects in which the business of that Commission might possibly be concerned. I was

also desirous of receiving the latest accounts of the proceedings on the slave question.

Full of these reflections, I had inadvertently omitted to take the right ford of the river, which I had now to repass, and, when about twenty yards from the shore, found my horse plunge all at once into deep water, considerably out of his depth: as he was swimming against the stream, which was exceedingly powerful, and as he grew weak with his exertions, my situation became somewhat perilous: in the course of five minutes, however, he recovered his footing, which he also lost again, successively, two or three times. At last, owing to weakness and the inequality of the river's bed, which was strewed thickly with large stones and as rough as a quarry, the poor animal fell and plunged us both under water. Being disengaged from the saddle, I was determined, at all risks, not to lose the bridle, for fear my horse might swim over me, or, what I more dreaded, swim from me; for I should have been, in

such case, perfectly helpless in so impetuous a current. I clung to him, holding on by the rein, till he again recovered footing, and being remounted, we proceeded with the utmost deliberation, when striking his fore feet against some hidden fragment of rock, he plunged down head foremost, and I, of course, with him. I still, however, retained my bridle, but the animal, in his endeavour to rise, struck me with his near fore foot such a blow on the temple as rendered me almost senseless. Still I had fortunately recollection enough not to lose my grasp, and, when I came to myself, found that I was again upon his back, and felt so much inconvenienced with the water which was flowing from my head, that I endeavoured to wipe it off with my sleeves. In so doing, I was brought more immediately to a sense of my peril, when I found that the streams which were flowing from my head were not of water but blood, which poured down copiously; so much so, indeed, that I became

seriously alarmed, thinking that so much would not proceed from an ordinary wound, but that I must have injured the temporal artery. By this time, we had come to a complete shallow, which I afterwards discovered was the proper ford, but so similar, by the shape of its banks, to that which I had mistaken for it, that I remained, some moments, apprehensive it might not prove the right one. However, we soon landed, and I continued galloping on after Señor Valdero, for the purpose of overtaking him, for relief, before I might be too weak to continue my intention, from the loss of blood which was still flowing so copiously. In this way I passed two Indians, who, by their exclamations, evidently conceived that I had been attacked by robbers, and was flying from them; and, whilst hesitating whether I should return to avail myself of such surgical assistance as these poor creatures might be able to afford, in the absence of all prospect of meeting any better, I was hailed by two or

three voices, and had the gratification to find they were those of Señor Valdero and his retinue.

He had taken up his quarters at a hut a little out of the road side, and had come out with the rest attracted by the noise made by my horse's galloping, which was at its fullest speed. Having dismounted, the first thing I asked for was a looking-glass, but there was none in the humble residence; nevertheless, on account of my anxiety to obtain one, Señor Valdero most kindly unpacked one of his trunks,—a business of no ordinary trouble when made up for travelling in these countries,—and produced a small piece affixed to a pocket-book. In the mean time, they had washed my temples with brandy and water; and I had become so faint that I remember they poured down my throat a large quantity of pure alcohol, which had nearly suffocated me. The blow had, as I thought, been exactly above the temporal artery; but a bandage with a hard plugget, which I

made myself for the occasion, being applied as tight as it could be attached, the bleeding fortunately subsided by degrees, and in the course of an hour I was well enough to resume my journey. I took a most deliberate view of the ford before I ventured again into this deceitful river, and my little horse trembled at every step he took: his courage, which was always indomitable, had been quite cooled upon this occasion, and he might, as the jockies say, have been governed with a packthread. On reaching the opposite bank I was glad to find that he was still fresh in vigour and spirit, and as I had written the communication which I wished to make to Mr. Bayley, as also a despatch to the government, I pushed forward to come up with my party, before night fall, at a good gallop, occasionally feeling my temple to ascertain if all was right;—the wound continued to bleed very slightly, and, before dusk, I reached Guastotoia.

This is a village containing about 400 souls: in the centre of it was a large cot-

tage with the usual viranda in front, where the baggage had been deposited. After supper, which had been preparing before my arrival, I felt vertigo and head-ache, but soon fell into a sound sleep.

The next day, although my spirit seldom failed me on ordinary occasions, I found myself too ill to proceed, and by the advice of Don Francisco, and my young attaché, I resolved to delay my departure till the evening. I never shall forget the kind attention of the Creole woman of this little establishment: she killed one of her finest fowls and stewed it into broth for my nourishment, made panada or gruel of various sorts, gave me her best bed, and turned out all her numerous little children into the village that they might not disturb my repose. This, with great abstinence, allayed the fever which was beginning to attack me, and at two o'clock, having sent the baggage on two hours sooner, under the superintendence of Don Francisco, Don Eugenio and myself proceeded, at a slow pace, to pursue our journey.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Don Eugenio and myself benighted and nearly lost in the middle of the River Chimalapañ. — Despatches brought from the Capital by Murillo.— Take him as my Servant.—Arrive at the City of Zacapa.

THE fields through which we passed were highly cultivated; the country was a mixture of rich plains and luxuriant forests, and having come to the verge of one of the latter, we found ourselves on the brink of a wide river. We could perceive the marks of cattle-feet on its edge, but could hardly venture to guess if it were only a watering place or the river's ford; for we had descended to it down a deep gully or ravine, and, on each side, the high banks were overgrown with lofty trees and a thick profusion of dwarf shrubs. We had no choice left us but to spend the night here, without bed or victuals, or to attempt the pass.

Accordingly, we waded carefully across for about thirty yards, when the river became more and more shallow, and at last ended in a small straggling island: we had, from this spot, the mortification to discover that the passage across to the opposite bank was three times as wide as that which we had encountered, and that the water was dark and without ripple, a fearful prognostic of its depth: farther up, there was an appearance of shallows, and, beyond, on the opposite side was an opening which might be the place of landing: we traversed slowly up the river, seldom finding it shallower than up to our saddle girths, and came upon a sand-bank: the view from this spot gave us a still more unfavourable opinion of the depth of the water: it was evidently the main bed which we had yet to pass; and, being both of the same opinion, we immediately returned.

In so doing, we were directed by the bearing of certain large trees which we had

purposely noticed on the banks we had just left; but the night was closing rapidly in, and by the time we had re-landed in the gully, it had become so dark, owing to the deep shade with which the spot was surrounded, that we could scarcely distinguish any path at all. My young friend, whom I now began to rally for his bad conductorship, dismounted, and groped about amongst the underwood: at length he came up to me and said he had found the route: he prevailed on me to accompany him back again to the side of the river where we had entered it, and turning his mule shortly round to the right, clambered up a steep bank, and, after a few paces, we again found ourselves in the forest, in a mule track, which, from all appearances, had been occasionally used as such, and that too at no distant period, as the prints of the animal's feet might still be distinguished in the path.

After half an hour's quick riding through sombre glens and upon a rich green turf, we espied a light, and came into a small

Indian settlement. We here hired two conductors, who preceded us with flambeaux, made of pine tree, which gave a glaring light: descending from the village, we came, in the course of a quarter of an hour, to the ford which we had been seeking: it was very fortunate that we did not venture through the river at the other spot, for it was excessively deep, and the landing was impracticable, owing to the abruptness of the banks and the thick underwood with which they were hemmed in. Had we ventured, we should probably have been all drowned, man and horse. The point at which we passed the Chimalapañ was quite deep enough, for the waters were very high, owing to the recent rains, and the sand-bank on which we had alighted would probably in a few more wet evenings be no longer distinguishable from the rest of the river.

When we landed on the other side, the road was so narrow, owing to the excessive vegetation, that we could scarcely pass, one

by one, and the peons had a difficulty in removing the branches to prevent them from striking out their lights. About a quarter of a mile on this side of the shore was another small Indian settlement, where we stopped whilst our conductors provided themselves with fresh flambeaux: considering the hazardous situations in which we had been, our present travelling gave us feelings of the most perfect comfort and security, and we continued on, at the same tranquil pace, till we reached the place of our destination, the village of Chimalapañ.

In the middle of the town was a shed, open on all sides, with the addition of a considerable aperture in the roof: as it rained a good deal during the night, this circumstance was one of much inconvenience, for there was hardly room to stow our beds and all our baggage out of the wet. I had here the pleasure of receiving a letter from Doña Maria, by the hands of one of the trusty servants of the family; his name was Murillo: he was

partly of African origin, and had been born and bred in the house: his occupation had been to take charge of the cargoes of native productions raised on the family estates and to receive the money for them in the capital, or bring back European goods in exchange, which he afterwards took to the wholesale dealers in the different provinces. On the latter occasions, he was frequently entrusted with large sums, and I could not but the more highly appreciate the kindness of his employers, who had now sent him to accompany me not only to the coast, but, if I found it requisite, to England. The fellow, who had performed the journey with great speed, having come the thirty-five leagues in two days on foot, was a good manly specimen of the caste between the Indian and the Negro. He was strong, healthy and athletic; and, hearing so good a character of him from Don Eugenio, his young master, I gladly availed myself of his services, especially as the Chinese was about

to leave us at the port: Murillo was aware that he was to accompany us thither, but had no idea, on leaving his home, that he was likely to be required to embark. I accordingly said to him, "Murillo, I will take you with me to England;" to which he replied immediately with a smile of delight,—"Si, Señor, me voy"—Yes, Sir, I go. We made no stipulations about wages, and clothing was not worth naming; for he was not encumbered with any except some cotton drawers and a pair of sandals.

I was sorry to find that Doña Maria's grief and anxiety at her brother's departure were not less in reality than they appeared to be; for that the late excitement had caused her delicate frame to sink under it, and obliged her to keep to her bed ever since our departure. I now remembered some stories I had heard of the violence of the affections of this young lady. When the old Spaniards, a few years ago, found it necessary for their safety to fly the country, her father had proceeded, for

that purpose, as far as the coast; but, having caught the fever there, he was brought back to the capital in litters, and, after an illness of fifteen days, died. During the whole of this sickness, which had terminated in a sort of typhus, the incessant watchings of this amiable girl could not be prevented:—she nursed her dying parent with devoted attention, and, in her phrensy, clung so closely to the corpse, that it was with difficulty she could be separated from it. As was natural to expect, she caught the infection, but fortunately got over the attack.

The next morning, we set off for Zacapa, which I found in the list of my route was honoured with the title of city: it lies seven leagues from Chimilapañ, and being situated about half way between the coast and the capital, may be considered, with regard to Guatemala, what Xalapa is to Mexico.

Previously to entering this city, we had to undergo the operation of unloading all our mules and conveying the baggage in

a punt over the rapid river which continued still to cross our route. The place was an ordinary ferry, and the boatmen used poles to convey us over, whilst the mules and horses were made to swim across: in our boat, which might be about fifteen feet long, other passengers had accommodated themselves, amongst whom were four women, who, when we had arrived on the opposite side, went about twenty yards from us and bathed themselves: they were very expert swimmers, and endeavoured to duck each other; playing all sorts of pranks in the water, evidently with a view to attract our approbation as to their agility and prowess. My companions and attendants took no more notice of them than if they had been so many ducks splashing in the water, but to me the sight was as curious as it was novel, and conducted with great decency, considering the habits of the country.

We put up at the house of the Alcalde, having reached the town at four o'clock

in the evening: whilst supper was preparing, we strolled about: the population with its vicinities, amounts to 8,000 souls: provisions and the necessaries of life are very cheap: every man has his horse: there are two churches with one curate and a coadjutor: the place is beautifully situated, and about thirty-four leagues from Izabal. The Alcalde, who was a man of some information, had, it appears, been accustomed to converse a good deal, of late, with foreigners: he was a hearty jovial companion, and his ideas of liberality were as generalized as could possibly be wished for by the most indiscriminate advocates for moral emancipation: he told me that Messrs. Wright and Pistock of Belize, had, about a year since, made a plan of the road from Izabal to Guatemala.

The next morning, before we started, I went with Don Eugenio to call upon a young Spaniard who was on his way to the capital from the coast, in order that we

might send letters by him to Eugenio's family, informing them of the arrival of their despatches by our new servant. In the house at which we called, the three daughters of the family were all up, at six o'clock in the morning, sitting on a dresser, making papelillos or paper cigars.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Leave Zacapa for Gualañ, and thence for Encuentros.

At four leagues from Zacapa, we stopped to sleep at a miserable little village called San Pablo, consisting of 300 Indians, living in cane huts: the inhabitants are particularly stupid, ill formed, and very diminutive. I went into some of these hovels, and sat down to chat with the inmates, but could make nothing out of them: they knew little of the capital of Guatemala, and had never heard of their present rulers: they knew how to make *tortillas*, cakes of Indian corn, and drink aguadiente; not that the habit of drunkenness was common amongst them, but that in the preparation of these two necessaries seemed to consist all their enjoyment of life. The accommodation which we re-

ceived at this place was of course very wretched: as we were starting, a drunken woman begged very importunately for a half rial to buy some brandy: so unreasonable a request was of course not complied with; and we had the pleasure of being well on our road by six o'clock, stopping to lunch at a hamlet called Zinzin: the abode at which we put up was tenanted by a very large family, consisting of a mother and six daughters, the youngest of whom was five years old. The mother was engaged in cooking in a separate hut, and the children were sprawling about in the hammocks or on the bedsteads of the chief apartment. They were fine children, and, apparently, as innocent as they were comely, but not likely to continue so, for the mother was very far from being an exemplary character.

We continued our journey through a country richly wooded and highly picturesque, and, after travelling eleven leagues in the course of the day, stopped

at Gualañ, putting up at the house of Doña Santa Maria Zafra: it was here found expedient to renovate our provisions: the bread, having been packed whilst it was hot, had fermented and become sour as well as hard: we had hitherto managed with it pretty well, but as we seldom met with any thing but *tortillas*, and were still less likely to meet with bread during the remainder of our journey, some care was taken by the good young lady above named in providing us not only with that, but such other necessaries as we might require.

Annexed to the Gran Sala was a room in which were four or five females, who were employed as seamstresses and in other light occupations, such as making *puros* and paper cigars. I pleased them much by purchasing largely of these commodities; and by my manner of payment for them, they were induced, I apprehend, to think rather highly of the generosity of the English character, which was the impression I wished them to feel. They congra-

tulated me upon having so large a freight of *tintas*, or indigo, and inquired if I was going to take it with me to my own country. On telling them that my trunks contained no merchandize whatever, they seemed much surprised and very anxious to know the nature of my baggage. The daughter of the establishment, Doña Francisca, a placid, good natured, domestic girl, came and sat by us whilst at supper, gave up her bed in the chief apartment, and seemed to have as much pleasure, as other girls might have found trouble, in waiting upon us. In the mean while, we discovered that she had a very extensive acquaintance in the town; and that, by some curious coincidence, they all appeared unanimously disposed to visit her, at the same time: ladies young and old came to see the little quiet Doña Francisca: she, at first, appeared surprised at so many unexpected calls; but, however, bore their intrusion with great patience, having discovered that their visits were

prompted rather by a curiosity of seeing the *lion* than the *lamb*.

Her curiosity was equally excited the next morning by the few ordinary articles of my dressing case, which were now reduced to those only of indispensable utility; for, in the course of my journeys, I had found little difficulty in inducing the admirers of such paraphernalia to accept of them: nevertheless I gave her a small-tooth comb which she appeared particularly to fancy, and I was honoured by her commission to bring her, on my return to the country, one of the finest pair of scissors that England could produce:—I hope she will not be disappointed.

Having the next day, the 20th July, seen Don Juan Atondo, correspondent of Mr. Bayley, of the house of Messrs. Barclay, and also the curate Don Miguel Reyna, the only padre whom I had met with at home on my route from Guatemala, we set off at four o'clock in the evening, and traversing a park-like country, reached

some sheds standing in an elevated spot, in the open fields, clustered round with large groves and thickets, and stopped here for the night: this halting place, which is four leagues from Gualañ is called the *Rancho*, or farm, of Iguana: the mules were turned loose into the fine pastures, for the night, and, as I apprehended, took an hour or two longer in being collected in the morning than was agreed on for the time of our departure. One had strayed away from the rest, and the peons having scoured the country for half a league round, at last brought her up by means of the leading *yegua*, or mare. This animal is bred a sort of natural pioneer, and one of them is quite necessary for every separate drove. The young leader (a filly is always preferred, and of a light colour as being more distinguishable by the beasts of burthen) is habituated to accompany its dam, and being accustomed to keep by her side, instinctively, ever after takes the lead of the other animals: this she is the more easily enabled to do, as she carries

nothing but the insignia of office, a bell round her neck, to attract and keep together her companions. The mules will distinguish the sound of this bell when inaudible by the human ear: having a dread of losing it, they voluntarily follow up at a sharp trot to put themselves in a commanding distance of it, when they will leisurely pursue their arduous course, as before. Considering the richness of the pasture, there was no excuse for the mule which had thus detained us, excepting that it was a young one, and being plenteously fed, might have wandered about for dainty morsels, or overslept itself in consequence of overeating: it was probably some such act of indiscretion, for the peons sorely punished the young delinquent for the trouble which it had given them; though, at the same time, they derived a real satisfaction in being able to assure me of the impossibility there would now be of proceeding any farther, that day, than to Encuentros, which was only five leagues distance.

The country for this space, was like

English park scenery, on a magnificent scale: fine verdant glens, a mile in length and as level as a bowling green, were intersected by lofty undulating hills, round the sides of which the route passed, and the whole ornamented with noble trees: on the tops of some of these eminences were oaks and firs and other trees peculiar to the colder regions, but which flourish the more luxuriantly in a temperate climate: in passing up to the summit of one of these small mountains, there is a deep ravine across which one of these fine trees had fallen, as if to indicate the feasibility of connecting the paths which travellers have to pass along on either side of it, but which now requires a detour of at least two miles, exceedingly steep and craggy, and the journey up which, by the way we were going, took us an hour's hard labour: other fine trees are growing close to the one which is fallen, and, such are the natural facilities which are offered, that twenty men might in one day make a solid and effectual

bridge over the pass alluded to: the road might also be shortened in other spots by the same simple process. The last two leagues of this journey are as rapid in its descent as the former in its rise: you continue proceeding downwards till you arrive at the hamlet of Encuentros, which means the meeting of the waters of the Motagua and Mancegua, two fine abundant rivers. You plunge all at once into a tropical climate: vegetation becomes so thick that you can scarcely make your way amongst it: the palms and bananas and other tropical shrubs hem in the narrow path, till at length you see, when you arrive at their very doors, the few cane cottages and mud built huts which form the village of Encuentros.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Hot and moist atmosphere of Encuentros.—Manner of passing the river.—Arrive at Mico.

THE inhabitants, who do not exceed one hundred, are poor and miserable: the spot is extremely unhealthy, and, but for the broad and noble river which skirts one of its sides, and gives some idea of space and cheerfulness, would induce you to believe you were thrown all at once into the bottom of a green pit. There is no place of worship, and mass is not performed more than once in a twelvemonth. The principal inhabitant, at whose house all travellers put up, is Doña Maria Barnes: she keeps a *posada*, or inn, and here we met with a Spaniard named Don Miguel Español, a man well to do in the commercial world, having a considerable fortune: he was a friend of my companion Don

Francisco: he had just left Belize; confirmed the news of the arrival of Mr. O'Reilley, but could throw no light on the nature of the Commission. Don Miguel was a gentlemanly well informed man, and we sat down to supper at a sort of table d'hôte, three of us taking possession of a bedstead for seats, and the rest accommodating themselves with boxes and other luggage, a judicious arrangement of which also furnished us with a table. The rain now came down profusely and continued without intermission during the whole night: in a short time the room was filled with frogs, who kept up an incessant clamour, repeated by their out door companions: the noise was so deafening that we could scarcely hear ourselves speak, the sound representing the word *agua* repeated by a myriad of croaking voices: it will be remembered that *agua* is the Spanish for water, and, although these amphibious animals were so lustily crying for more, we were of opinion that we were

copiously indulged with that element. Notwithstanding the incessant rain, we were suffocatingly hot, and were obliged to leave the hut open, so that the torrent poured into it not only by the door-way but dashed over us in a volume of mist through the open reed work of the walls: if a moist and hot atmosphere was ever encountered to excess, we had the advantage of proving the nature of it on this occasion: when the sun rose, we got up, but seemed to be walking about in a steam-bath: the luggage had been covered up and was kept tolerably dry and was now put on board one of the ferry boats to convey us to the opposite shore.

The mules were driven through the dense underwood to a point about a mile up the river, for the purpose of landing at the proper ford; which they could not have done without this precaution, to counteract the rapidity of the current, which was running at near five knots an hour.

We had embarked with our luggage in

two separate boats, the larger one containing not only that, but all the mule trappings. When our boat was half across the river, it was perceived that nothing could induce the animals to take the water: on the opposite shore stood a man with the bell of their leader; but they had sense enough to see that their leader was with them; and would not pay any attention to the summons. We could see the muleteers attempting to shove the leader into the water, and they effected this more than once, but the animal obstreperously took to the nearest land, which was on the side from which she set out: in this dilemma, Murillo requested to be put back on the shore we had left, as he was sure, he said, he could bring them all over. He was accordingly conveyed back in the boat from which we had now landed, and having arrived at the spot where the mules were standing, he attached a rope to the leader, which quietly followed him into the water, and swam after him: the mules followed of course;

but they had an arduous job to buffet against the current, and, following the example of their conductor, swam with their heads almost directly up the river: even with this counteracting effort, some of the weaker animals landed a considerable distance lower down than the point which they were attempting to make. To reload them was the business of an hour, and, in the interim, we passed up a gully, the natural landing place, and arrived at a hut on the brow of the hill, where, it now being dinner time, we filled up the interval by making that meal on such refreshments as the place afforded.

The Chinese, who, amongst his numerous qualifications, prized himself on his cooking, had already made great progress in a curry, substituting the Chile pepper for that powder: he proved himself an able artist, and replenished our stores with live poultry, which he unmercifully slung by their legs to his holsters and crupper in such quantities, that he seemed, when in his saddle, to

be seated in an open feather bed. As the birds complained of their situation, he kept talking to them with many quaint aphorisms, which excited the universal approbation of the muleteers; indeed, he had previously established his character amongst them as a wag, and there was something altogether so grotesque in his appearance, that the better part of the company could scarcely restrain their laughter at merely looking at him: so that, now, every observation he made, however foolish, was sure to be a palpable hit.

Having been detained two days longer on the road than I expected, I was afraid that the goleta which General Codd, the Intendant of Belize, had been so obliging as to send to Izabal, might return without me, finding that I had not arrived at the time intended; and Don Eugenio undertook to ride forward down to the port to apprize the captain of my coming. He accordingly set off for this purpose; but, on our arrival at Mico, the last stage but

one to the coast, I was surprised to find that he had put up there, and was chatting, very merrily, with the niece of the host. An Indian had been very properly sent forward to execute the commission, by the advice of the major domo of this inn, who said it was quite impossible for the youth to make his way over the mountain before night fall; as his mule was none of the best conditioned, and the forest was full of swamps and dangerous ravines: I was glad to find that the landlord had used such proper discretion, and we prepared to make ourselves comfortable for the night.

The young woman, whose name was Doña Juana Toribia Samaya, was the life and ornament of this dreary though picturesque spot. She had excited the interest of other European travellers; and shewed me a Bible which had been given her by the consul from the United States, in which was written her name at full length as I have transcribed it, with the name of the donor. She seemed delighted with the

gift, though it was not likely to be very useful, as, I think she informed me, she could not read. In her conversation with Don Eugenio, it appeared that they had previously met, and that it was now two years since they last had that pleasure: nobody could see her without being struck with her beauty; she had also a great share of prudence, for I was indebted to her for some personal advice which at once discomfited and surprised me;—as she cautioned me not to move about the door-ways after dark, without shoes, as there were snakes which sometimes crawled about the door-posts, whose bite was instant death.

The person who keeps this posada is Don Manuel Mansano; and any person landing at Izabal, who wishes to go up the country, must address themselves to him for the purpose of procuring mules for the journey.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Difficulty of passing the Mountain.—Reach Izabal.—Meeting with Mr. O'Reilley.—Receive a Despatch from Mr. de Soza, Minister for Foreign Affairs.—Fort of San Felipe.—Voyage out of the Gulf.—Disembark at Belize.

AT nine o'clock the next morning, Saturday the 23d July, we set off on that most tremendous expedition of passing the mountain: it is laborious at all seasons, but, in the rains, the difficulties of it are hardly to be described.

Previously to arriving at Mico, the last evening, we had passed through a grove of the most magnificent palms that I had ever seen: mackaws and various other parrots with different birds of splendid plumage studded the loftier trees, and startled, at intervals, the deep solitude of the scene with their appalling screech. Here and there a large monkey darted across the

path, and, peeping round the trunk of a tree, made hideous faces at us as we passed: amidst the high matted reeds, sometimes, we observed or fancied we observed the rustling of some animal, when we instinctively put our hands upon our holsters: it might be a tiger, for these animals are not wanting to this wild seclusion: the poor mules, in the mean while, were plunging, every few paces, up to their girths in deep morass, and, if the ground was hard, it was so slippery with the wet that they could scarcely maintain a footing.

On entering the route, this day, toward the mountain, we descended into large plains, skirted with forests. When about a league from Mico, it was discovered that one of the baggage mules was missing: half an hour's search was made, but no mule appeared; the animal had been left in one of the forests through which we had passed, and nothing could be done but to go back in search of it. In this predicament, my faithful Murillo again stepped

forward; a staff in his hand to support him from slipping down from the narrow crooked paths which often ran along the edge of precipices, and with nothing else but a pair of short drawers to encumber him in the way of dress: he asked two or three pertinent questions of the chief muleteer, and darted off into the thickest of the forest: in less than half an hour we saw him at a distance coming up to us with the lost mule: in the interim, I had undergone much apprehension that the animal would not be found, and of course concluded that it was the one which carried the only baggage which I should have been really distressed at losing,—I mean my despatches. By an extraordinary coincidence this was the very fact, and I was, naturally, the more delighted in witnessing the mule's arrival. The question which Murillo had asked of the muleteer shewed his knowledge of the nature of the animal and his own peculiar fitness and utility as a conductor in travels of this difficult nature: he had inquired

from what farm the animal had been taken, well knowing that, on losing the drove, it would be able instinctively to direct its course to that spot, and this it was doing when he overtook and brought it back.

It took us eight hours of hard labour to pass the mountain: about half the time was occupied in the ascent and the other half in the descent; for there were sufficient variations in this route to break any general uniformity in our progress either up or down. The few plains which occurred were deep glens in which the animals found no footing, but plunged along, for the most part in beds of mud. In the slopes they sometimes got fixed in with their baggage in the narrow defiles of the rocks, or foundered, with all four legs so deeply stuck into the cavities as to render them incapable of all exertion: in such cases, the muleteers disburthen the animal, and with their united efforts extricate it from its thraldom. Every step is a labour: each leg is pulled out of one hole, even in the

harder plots, and placed on the edge of another into which it slips down by aid of the lubricating mud upon the surface; and in many instances the poor animal rests upon its chest or its belly, the hole being too deep for its legs to fathom. In these cases, I had some difficulty in riding my horse, for he would always endeavour to keep his feet out of the holes, whilst the nature of the road rendered it impossible for him to do so: at first he was violently enraged and threatened to dash himself to pieces; but by degrees, as I pulled him down each step into the holes, he began to walk, much against his inclination: he was the only horse in the whole party; and I was strongly advised to ride a mule; but I knew the value of being well mounted, and had reason to congratulate myself in sticking to my resolution, on the present as well as every other occasion.

We were now within two leagues of the coast, and I ventured on alone some distance through the forest with the joyful expect-

ation of seeing the waters which embraced in their span the coast I was about to leave and that to which I was going. The arduous parts of the journey had been passed, and the tropical foliage evinced the low regions of the port of Izabal. By the rapidity with which I had proceeded I thought that I ought to have arrived there, if I had gone the right way: by the position of the sun it appeared that I could not be mistaken, but as there were still three hours of daylight and the spot was romantically beautiful, I dismounted and refreshed my horse with a drink from a pure stream which crossed our path Whilst I was remounting, an Indian passed by, who informed me that I was not far from the direct route, and that the muleteers would pass within a small distance of me, or perhaps might come by that very spot. As he had proceeded from Izabal, I detained him in conversation about the place: learnt that a British schooner had arrived on the preceding evening, and, from

what I could ascertain, that Mr. O'Reilley had come in her. In the course of half an hour, my companion looking through the forest, said, "Alli estan," (there they are,) but I could see nothing. "Las mulas, Señor" (the mules, Sir). It was two or three minutes before I could distinguish them, passing, in the distance, through the wild recesses of the forest. In the course of another hour, we entered Izabal: after leaving the woods, the last mile or two lay through wide lanes covered with green sward, and might be passable enough when not so swampy as they now were.

The lake which is of fresh water, as its name *Dulce* denotes, is a fine expanse of about thirty miles by twenty, so that it forms a beautiful object as you descend down to the coast: as the creek, which leads into the small gulf, or Golfeto, communicating with the Atlantic is very narrow, its mouth is not discernible, and the borders of the gulf are therefore, as far as they can be made out, composed of thickly wooded

slopes rising gradually into a spacious verdant amphitheatre.

About half a mile from the shore lay the schooner, and, nearer in, three or four smaller craft, with a few boats and canoes, upon the beech: the town consists of thirty houses indifferently built, with a very hut-like appearance, and in a straggling manner, within a quarter of a mile square; some of them being within thirty yards of the water's edge, which is affected by a slight tide. The population is about 100 souls, exclusive of the military, who are on duty for the defence of the place, and who, at this time, did not exceed twenty-seven, rank and file.

The only house with any tolerable convenience or comfort is that of Mr. Benson, and thither we were directed to guide our steps. Having entered the outer yard of this abode I met poor Mr. O'Reilley: I shall never forget the delight which he manifested in seeing me: he had suffered much in his passage up the gulf, and enter-

tained many apprehensions at the nature of the journey he had to encounter to the capital: indeed my appearance warranted him in the conclusion that it was not one of an ordinary nature; for my white cotton jacket, as well as my face, had become so splashed and covered with mud as completely to disguise their natural appearance: my leather boots or leggings were one mass of half dried clay, and my English leather breeches (I generally rode in these, without buttons at the knees) had nearly adopted the same extraneous colouring. We had of course much to say to each other, and, being left to ourselves, began to talk over particulars: I now discovered that the Commission which had arrived at Belize was the Commission of Inquiry into the State of the Laws of the West Indies, and had nothing to do with any of the Commissions to the New Republics; Mr. O'Reilley told me that his appointment as consul was not to interfere in any way with the duties I was sent to fulfil,

but on the contrary he was ordered to look to me for any advice or assistance which, as a new comer unacquainted with the politics and manners of the country, he might require: and, what in my present situation was not a little consolatory, he also assured me that there was a strong impression at home that I was likely to give satisfaction with regard to the Commission with which I had been intrusted: on the other hand, he learned from me the exact state of affairs in the republic to which he had been sent: I gave him my horse and accoutrements, which were valuable to him, as he was unprovided with a saddle or the leggings of which I have spoken: he had also the benefit of such other articles of my travelling apparatus as might be deemed convenient for him to retain;—including the Chinese: he gave me a filtering stone, with other small conveniences for a voyage, and, after this interchange of good offices, we parted on the following evening, Sunday, 24th July, at seven o'clock, when I

embarked on board the schooner which had brought him from Belize.

A few minutes before I left the house, I received an extraordinary courier from Mr. Soza, the minister for foreign affairs: he had sent me a small box containing specimens of the different tobaccos produced in the country, made up into cigars. I ought to have mentioned that I had yesterday paid a visit to Don Indalesio Pergamo, the commandant of the town: the poor man had been ill of an intermittent fever: he was lying in his hammock, and presented a picture of the most frightful emaciation: he hardly seemed as if he would live a minute: I peeped into his dwelling to take my leave of him before I went aboard, but he was unconscious of any attention, and I left the poor sufferer for dead. It was a sad parting specimen of the sickness and mortality of the coast of Izabal.

We had been able to provide ourselves with a few fowls, which, with some onions and green chillies, and a little fresh bread,

constituted the stock for our voyage. The point from which we embarked, and which is put down in the maps as Bodegas, to the first strait, is seventeen miles; and, about seven o'clock the next morning, we reached Fort San Felipe, on the left side of the mouth of the strait, in passing down. There were on board the schooner five men besides the captain, who now went on shore to show his papers to the commandant of the fort: the battery consisted of four guns, of about fourteen and twenty-four pounds calibre, commanding the river both ways. The fort itself is on a rising ground, and behind it are five or six indifferent cottages: the commandant's house is little better than a hut; and the whole population, garrison included, did not amount to thirty souls.

The commandant, a man of forty, and of the caste between a creolian and a negro, was very polite and ordered breakfast to be provided: I offered him a handsome recompense, but he would not accept of any; I, therefore, paid the compliment to his

daughter, a buxom young girl, possessing in a prominent degree all the supposed perfections of negro beauty. She had on a turban composed of an indifferent old handkerchief, which I took off, and, happening to have a handsome maroon coloured China one in my pocket, twisted it round her head, leaving her to tie the knot according to her fancy; which she immediately did, in an off-hand way, and with as much composure as though this was the usual manner in which she had been accustomed to make her toilette. She now asked what else I had to give her; seemed particularly desirous for my shoes, which she tried on her own feet, and made me promise, as I knew the size, to bring her back some when I returned from my country; only to remember that they were to be of the same colour as the handkerchief. This flirtation, which was going on before the assembled population of the fort, caused great amusement and satisfaction. The commandant chuckled at his daughter's address, and was pleased

with her affable and courteous demeanour towards strangers: the soldiers who were also Africans, grinned and chattered out their approbation, and we embarked with the blessings and good wishes of all parties, particularly of the sable miss, whose parting words were—"don't forget the shoes."

The narrow passage between the large gulf which we had left and the little gulf we were about to enter takes the name of the fort, and is called the river Felipe: it is ornamented with woody mountains rising on each side from its banks, which vary in width from one to three or even five miles, up the channel: the large gulf was as smooth as glass, but on entering the river the stream became pretty rapid.

By seven o'clock this evening the 25th, we arrived with a good breeze to within seven miles of the bar, and came to anchor in the narrowest part of the river: here, the banks were on each side closed in with lofty umbrageous mountains: the mast of our little vessel got entangled amongst the branches of the

trees which were hanging over the water: about ten o'clock a storm of thunder and lightning came on, which lasted, without intermission, till two in the morning: the peals were terrific and the flashes almost blinding: the heat was most intense, but it was impossible to keep the hatches open, as the little cabin would have been deluged with the rain: Don Francisco and myself had tried the plan of keeping them shut, but found it not to be endured, and we had no other resource but to sit upon deck, exposed to the appalling rigour of the storm. After this miserable night, we weighed anchor, the next day, at five, and came off the Vigia, or Look-out, on our right: a little a-head we observed some long stakes stuck up in the water to show the channel. Here the schooner touched the first shoal for twenty yards over a bar of about five and an half to six feet: this shallow runs across a small bay about three quarters of a mile wide, just after leaving the channel which is not in some parts a quarter of a mile

broad: indeed looking back at the latter from the bay it appeared like a rivulet at the bottom of some woody ravine. Vessels sometimes get grounded on the bar for three or four days together: the sea breeze sets in over it from ten to eleven A. M. daily: this increases the depth of the water, as it throws back the current of the river; so that vessels drawing more than is usually on the bar, lie to on the inner side of it, and shift their ballast to starboard, whereby they also gain another foot of water. A fine breeze brought us by eleven o'clock to point Manawick, and at one we were off Seven Hills; the remainder of the day and all the night we made no progress, as the north-east wind blew directly in our teeth, and continued so for the whole of the next day, the 28th.

Our faces were dreadfully scorched and blistered by exposure to the hot weather, and we felt sorely tired of the voyage, although it was considered a tolerably favourable one: we had performed it in five

days, and it is seldom effected in less than from five to eight to Belize, and from eight to ten from Belize to Izabal; as, in the latter case, the current is against you in the very places where the wind would be most useful, but is kept off by the lofty barriers encircling the narrow channel; so that it is necessary to get out of the vessel and tow her, with infinite labour, along the shore, impeded by the branches of the trees and the obstructions from the natural unevenness of the banks.

CHAPTER XXX.

Feelings on arriving at a British settlement.—Disappointment in not finding a passage by the Mahogany Ships.—Attacked with the fever.—Make acquaintance with the Intendant and Inhabitants.—Yellow fever rages at Jamaica.—Gulf of Florida swarming with Pirates.—Take passage in the Margaret, Trader.

It was about five o'clock in the evening when we landed at Belize; on passing close by the fort which protects the mouth of the river as well as the whole town, I was much struck with the chubby appearance of some children belonging to the soldiers of the garrison. We were shown to the only inn in the place, kept by Mrs. Ebrington, a fine English woman, fat, fair, and forty, and the widow of an English officer: the apartments bore also the peculiar characteristics of English comfort. The side-board was covered with drinking

glasses of every shape and figure, from the champaigner with its dandified waist down to the broad-bottomed rummer: spruce looking mahogany tables with attendant chairs were arranged in symmetrical order, inviting the guests to their snug, exclusive, repasts: I sat down at one of them, and took up a newspaper; it was the "Times", and, with a feeling of satisfaction which I cannot express, began to fancy myself already in England. Two smart little negro boys officiated as waiters; the landlady was out, but the contents of a cold larder were placed before us, to which we did ample justice, having been almost starved for the last two days: my Guatemalian companions were delighted with the bottled porter, preferring it to the champaign and the rarer specimens of the cellar. In the course of the evening, our good hostess returned, and installed us in possession of the whole house, having requested two other gentlemen who were her guests to remove to some apartments

which she provided for them in the town: we were comfortably lodged; but could not help regretting that the rooms were so small and low pitched.

The climate of Belize is exceedingly hot: indeed, the average of the thermometer, night and day, was about 95°, during the period of our stay; which proved at least a fortnight longer than I had intended. The fact was, that the mahogany ships were all on the point of sailing, being obliged to do so, by their charter, by the 1st of the month. I was diligently employed during the whole evening, in endeavouring to get a passage in one, but had the mortification to find that there was no accommodation left: I was the more distressed at this circumstance, from finding myself attacked, the next night, with a bilious fever; Don Eugenio was also confined to his bed, and the prospect of our departure became more and more uncertain. I had, on that day, the honour of dining with the intendant, General Codd, where I met Major Schaw,

his aid-de-camp, a gentleman to whose kindness and hospitality I have much pleasure in bearing testimony, as also to that of his good lady: they contributed greatly to my gratification during my residence at this port.

Monday, 8th August. This day we made an aquatic excursion up the country. Two large pitpans were hired for the purpose, one containing the company and the other our provisions. About twelve miles up the river, which bears the name of the town, we disembarked at a negro's hut to breakfast, and then proceeded about seven miles farther, where we spent the day in gipsy fashion, in one of those sequestered verdant spots with which the banks of the river abound. In our progress we met nothing but some negroes with rafts of mahogany trees which they were bringing down to the beach, where they are trimmed with large axes into square sides, previously to embarkation: at this time, most of the ships were loaded and ready to sail; but

there were logs to the amount of some hundreds in different states of readiness for embarkation, and the supply for the next general, or any chance, shipment was thus being made ready. The fever with which I had been attacked was of a very dangerous nature; the patient usually recovers or dies within the twenty-four hours. Having got over it, I found myself much debilitated, but in good spirits; which this little excursion greatly tended to promote.

Wednesday, 10th. I fell in company with a trading captain from Jamaica, who said that the yellow fever was raging with a violence almost unprecedented; that many of the officers of his Majesty's ships lying there had been invalided and had leave to go home to England: he mentioned the names of two in particular who had just died, whom I remembered to have seen in Mexico; and he added that there was little chance of any of his Majesty's ships coming down to Honduras for some weeks.

There were only three or four ships now left at Belize: two of them were about to sail singly to England; these were the Maria and the Margaret, and the two others were bound to New York and Boston.

I had heard most dreadful accounts of the piracies in the Gulf of Florida; but, appalling as they were, they did not seem much worse than the plan of going to Jamaica and waiting for a passage to England. My object was to get home with my Report, and I resolved, at all risks, to take my passage in one of the ships now lying in the road. With this view, I hired a pitpan to go on board them, but had not proceeded far before it became evident that our feeble bark could not stand the sea which we were about to encounter: I stated my apprehensions to the two boatmen, and with difficulty persuaded them to put back and provide a larger one, which they did: it was three times the burden of the former, and yet was nearly being upset in consequence of the swell occasioned by the bar of the

river. With the greatest difficulty we got on board the different ships; for the sea was extremely rough, owing to a great ground swell and a bore which was setting in.

On returning, I remarked to the two negroes who were rowing, that the little pit-pan would certainly have been swamped: they both agreed, with the utmost indifference, that it would, but they added with a smile of intellectual satisfaction, "Massa know to swim!" I replied that if I did, it might be of little use owing to the number of sharks, for the bay was full of them, —was it not? "O yes, yes, massa, plenty shark;" with another grin, was their reply.

The American captain was a civil man, and wanted me much to proceed with him, as also did a young merchant who had come from Boston to Belize with a cargo of dried fish and other articles, intending to sell a portion of them at Jamaica, but he had now renounced all intention of proceeding thither, for fear of the fever. They both admitted the probability of being attacked

by pirates, but said that, with the addition of my party, we might possibly be able to encounter them with success; making, at the same time, a display of their ammunition, which consisted of two small cannons, three muskets, one horse pistol, and three swords.

The English vessels were a little better armed, but as I did not speculate altogether on the advantages they afforded of this redoubtable description, and as the Maria sailed the next day, I had no choice but to fix upon the Margaret, this being the only vessel now remaining. She had been built in the United States for the Colombian government, burden 280 tons; she carried four twelve pounders, was a remarkably fine strong vessel, but as she had been lying some months at Belize, the bottom of her was covered with barnacles, which would impede her sailing; she had also the misfortune, whilst detained in harbour, to lose two captains; one of whom died of the fever, in the house of my landlady, and the other was lost upon a reef, a

week before our arrival, being out on a party of pleasure to one of the quays with which the town is environed; the boat having been upset by the breakers, and the survivors being of opinion that they saw the poor man carried away by a shark. Whether these circumstances had any effect upon the sailors of Belize, who were probably not less superstitious than those of other parts, it cannot be determined, but it afterwards appeared that there were only four hands engaged out of the twelve necessary to man her, at the time I took my passage. She was, however, obliged to sail on the 15th, as the hurricane season was commencing: the other vessels sailed on the 1st, but the Margaret was allowed a fortnight later by her insurers, on account, as I was informed, of being so fine a sailer. The interval which I spent at Belize was now employed in collecting such information respecting the nature of its trade as might bear upon the connexion it had with Guatemala.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Description of Belize.

When the English first came to the Honduras shore to cut logwood and mahogany, the wants of the settlers at Belize were so few that the ships generally came out in ballast, which they used to throw out promiscuously in the mouth of the river, so as to increase the bar and impede the navigation: it was afterwards decreed that all ballast should be discharged at a certain spot about half a mile from the right shore; where, being accumulated by time, and increased by marine substances, it had formed the island on which the fort was built:—this island is therefore genuine British soil.

The town is situated on each side of the river's mouth, and connected by a wooden bridge. At the southern extremity is the

church, a neat ornamental building, and the governor's house which is handsome and substantial, upon a small elevation, close to the sea shore. I was particularly struck with the airiness and comfort of this abode: a spacious hall with wide staircase led to the first floor, in which two net hammocks were suspended so as to catch the benefit of the sea breeze, which, by opening the drawing room door, might pass directly through the house. There was no kind of draperies or carpets, all the articles of furniture looking hard, cold, and plain, and even the floors were made of some sort of wood answering that description; the only inconvenience was that they were not a little slippery. On the whole, I would recommend any body proceeding to those parts, who might want to build a house for their accommodation, to take the one in question for their model. With three or four moderate exceptions, all the rest of the town is composed of wooden buildings stuck upon posts, without any

ground floor, and seldom with more than one story: they stand close upon the edge of the beech, and look as if they had been left there by the ebb, after having been floated away, by some extraordinary high tide, from the banks of the Thames between Rotherhithe and Blackwall.

My hospitable friend, Major Schaw, had great difficulty in getting any house at all: that which he now occupied was intended for a school: in shape and materials it was like the child's toy purporting to represent Noah's Ark; for it was built entirely of wood, with the roof sloping uniformly the whole length down each side from the centre: it was eighty feet long, fourteen wide, and thirteen high. The Major was living there under sufferance, as the boys wanted the school-room;—but he had, I believe, contracted to have his house sent out to him from New York: indeed the best houses in the town were most of them built there.

The inhabitants of Belize are dealers only in the raw material: the mahogany

tables of my hostess were manufactured in England, whilst the wood from which they were cut had travelled upwards of 15,000 miles before they reached the spot of their ultimate destination, that being the same shore on which they had grown. One of the largest of the logs ever imported into England, was bought at Liverpool for £378, and was supposed to have returned to the manufacturer at least £1,000. If cut into veneers, £550 of this sum would be paid in wages to British mechanics.

To the north of the town lie the barracks, behind which, and all round, within the circumference of three or four miles, the country is closed in with woods and marshes, rendering it perfectly inaccessible either to friend or foe. As it is liable therefore to attack only from the sea-board, and as the fort has room enough in it to be made capable of holding artillery sufficient to repel a formidable fleet, Belize ought to be considered a very important key to this part of the continent.

The European inhabitants, who may not exceed thirty families, are divided into two classes: the *elite* party had given a ball to which the other had not been invited; and the latter were busily engaged in making preparations to outvie, by the strength of their purses, the entertainment from which they thought they had been so unreasonably excluded. These jealousies had been going on for some time; but no body could tell me the precise grounds upon which they were founded: some were, however, bold enough to say that their neighbours, the high party, (I do not pretend to vouch for the truth,) were smugglers to a vast extent; that they dreaded the chance of a settled government in Guatemala, when they could not run their goods as they had been in the habit of doing, for so many years, at Omoa, and Izabal;—and, in fact, that they wished to keep every thing snug and quiet to themselves; abominating the idea of the new commission-houses which were forming from the Havannah and other parts, and to which, as

it should appear, my informants were avowedly and warmly attached. The latter party were great slavery abolitionists, and advocates for free labour; and the former, they affirmed, were the more inimical to the Central Republic, on account of its having passed its act emancipating not only the slaves within its own territory, but those of other states who might pass over into it. This was certainly a very serious evil, which required redress; for the slaves belonging to the British inhabitants of Belize had passed over to Guatemala to the number of between two and three hundred. It is but justice to General Codd, the intendant of the colony, to repeat that he used his best exertions to procure their restoration, though without effect. It was my firm but humble opinion that the Guatemalian government ought to have restored them; and it was hoped that the matter would be speedily and satisfactorily adjusted in a treaty between Great Britain and that republic.

As a British settlement, this colony is

not of so much importance on account of the specific advantages which it derives from the liberty of cutting logwood and mahogany, by virtue of the treaty of Versailles 3d of September 1786, as from its being the natural entrepôt between Great Britain and the Central Republic.

The river Belize is navigable for pitpans till within two days' land carriage of another river which falls into the Lake of Terminos, communicating with the river Tobasco, which also unites with the Guasacualco; the latter being, by means of the river San Juan, brought into close contact with Alvarado:—so that, in case of a war with Mexico or any other power which might cause the gulf to be blockaded, the town of Belize might supply Tobasco, Oaxaca, and the whole kingdom of Mexico with dry goods, all by inland navigation, with only two days' land carriage. A plan of this settlement was made by actual surveys of Du Vernay, and published by Laurie and Whittle.

The mahogany exported by British settlers may be calculated at about sixty square-rigged vessels at 120,000 feet each, value about £400,000 annually; and the value of Guatemalian produce, such as indigo, cochineal, &c. exported, amounts to three times as much again. It is supposed that the sales of one commercial house at Belize average £15,000 currency per month, which is one twentieth part of what is sold, and would make the sales of British dry goods imported for the supply of that colony and Guatemala at least £2,500,000 currency, or about £1,500,000 sterling. The greatest part of the import and export trade of Guatemala is carried on by the port of Izabal, at the bottom of the Golfo Dulce, and by that of Omoa, on the left of the entrance of that gulf. The goods are conveyed between the English settlement of Belize and those parts in small schooners drawing about seven feet water, from four to seven tons burden, and charging for the freight from 150 to 200 dollars per trip each

way. They average from four to ten days in making the voyage; being incommoded one way by the stream running out of the gulf, and the other by the north-east wind which blows down it nine months out of the year. The distance, which is about 200 miles, might be performed by a steam-boat in twenty-four hours.

Sunday, 14th August. To-day, one of these schooners arrived from Izabal with four passengers and merchandize. The parties brought us letters from the capital, and, amongst the rest, one for Don Eugenio, by which we were happy to find that his little sister had recovered her spirits and was much better. These passengers were commercial men, and having been ten days from Izabal, seemed exhausted by their trip. The only accommodation they had on shore was a small out-house on the quay, about twelve feet square, in which three of them were lying down on the floor with their nightcaps or handkerchiefs on their heads and nothing on their bodies but a

shirt and linen trowsers: one was too much exhausted even to smoke, and all four of them seemed as if they would hardly recover the effects of the exertions they had undergone, and the heat which they were now enduring.

The Guatemalians suffer exceedingly in these trips to Belize: they consider it a journey of great peril, and it is asserted that three persons out of five are sure to fall victims to it; but I think this is an exaggerated statement; perhaps one in three would be nearer the fact; though, in the instance of the diplomatic and official characters who arrived there, from the United States, whilst I was in the country, two out of three died from the effects of the climate: the return from Belize to Guatemala is worse than the voyage thither: the difficulty of going up the narrow straits and the gulf, owing to the strong current, renders the voyage most tedious, whereas, however opposite may be the wind, you cannot help drifting down with the stream.

CHAPTER XXXII.

Embark for England.—Nearly wrecked off Ambergris Quay.—Vessel runs upon the Colorados-reef.—Becalmed off the Havannah.—Clear the Gulf.—Voyage across the Atlantic.—Land at Deal.

As we were to embark the next day, I called to take leave of the intendant, to whom I was indebted for much civility, and on Monday the 15th, about two o'clock, went on board the vessel which was to take us to England. We did not sail till the next day; for our crew was not complete. The master was a Mr. Smith, a shrewd good natured Glasgow man: he had been mate of another vessel and was induced to take the command of this: our mate was a clever active young fellow who belonged to the brig, but had declined taking charge of her; though, from the ability he evinced during the voyage, he proved himself perfectly competent to the task. After dusk,

three or four more hands came on board, also the pilot; and after proceeding amongst the quays for about seventeen miles, we anchored on the 17th: when the pilot had left us, the evening set in very stormy: it afterwards blew a hurricane; we were off Ambergris Quay, and, the wind blowing hard from the N.E., we endeavoured to tack, but missed stays, and were a long time before we could get her to fill and gather way enough to make a second attempt, which most fortunately succeeded, as we had not room to wear, and must have been cast away had she missed stays a second time.

On the 23d, about sun-set, when off the western point of Cuba, the mate, whilst he happened to be looking over the side of the vessel, in conversation with me, suddenly started up, ordered the helm to be put a-lee and all sail to be reduced. I soon discovered that we were running right amongst a shoal of sunken rocks, which proved to be the Colorados: we had not room either to wear or stay: and were gliding upon

them as gently as possible: we then got out the long-boat, put the kedge anchor into her, and were proceeding to carry it with only a three inch hawser: it immediately struck me that so small a rope would not be strong enough to heave us off, and I prevailed upon the captain to make use of one double the size: it was most fortunate that he followed my advice, as we were obliged to heave so hard that we were in momentary expectation of the one we did use breaking: at length the hawser dropped all of a sudden, and we concluded it had snapped and all was over with us, but the men in the boat observed that we were afloat, and called to us to heave round, which we did right merrily: we then weighed the anchor, made sail, and stood off.

At two o'clock, P. M., the next day we saw a raking vessel coming up to us, full sail, but when within two miles of us she tacked about and veered off. The 25th and 26th we were becalmed off the island

of Cuba, and suffered much apprehension on account of the numerous pirates with which the coast is infested. The captain, mate, and the whole of the crew had their separate stories to tell of the bloody deeds of those miscreants, as each new creek or table-land marked out the spot in which they had been perpetrated. The captain said that, on his way to Belize, he had been boarded by a small boat containing thirty men, who pretended they only wished to know if they had any Spaniards aboard: they told him it was useless to make any resistance, for that, on firing a shot, more boats would put off, and they should all be massacred: he escaped with no other injury than some plunder of the articles they wanted out of the cargo. "But what became of the Eliza?" said another, "Why she was skuttled off Yucatañ," answered a third, "and Jem, who escaped up the country, afterwards saw all the bodies of his messmates on the beach without their heads."

This kind of conversation, a thermo-

meter at 98°, and a dead calm which made it easy for pirates to row up to us and impossible for us to escape, should they be inclined to attack us, rendered our situation any thing but agreeable. To add to my comfort, I had been presented, on my departure from Belize, with some English newspapers; in the shipping accounts of which I had the satisfaction of reading some delectable specimens of the proceedings of these marauders: one I remember was particularly striking, respecting a circumstance which had taken place, a few months before, at the Bay of Matanzas, which spot, if we were fortunate enough, we might expect to be off in the course of twenty-four hours:—it was, that a vessel about 300 tons burthen was found stranded within three miles of that port: she had been plundered and skuttled, and the decks were strongly marked with blood, and it was added, "It is supposed that all hands were murdered." There was something so unbecoming and unsatisfactory in

this mode of being taken off, that I would, at this time, willingly have exchanged places with the lowest officer in his Majesty's navy, on the point of a desperate engagement; for I should at least have died honourably, and my name and death would have been recorded for the benefit of my relatives, as far as regarded the certainty of my fate: but should any thing happen to me of the nature we were anticipating, not even that consolation would be left them; besides which, the objects of my Mission would be lost to the government, who might, in the absence of information respecting the motives by which my conduct was actuated, have condemned it for the very exposure to which I was thus subjected. I, therefore, agreed with the captain to land me at the Havannah, in the hopes of falling in with one of his Majesty's ships, or being able to get a passage in some vessel proceeding with a convoy out of this dangerous gulf; but it so happened that just as we were passing the

mouth of the harbour, a fine breeze sprung up, which promised to take us well on our voyage, and carried us on during the night within twenty leagues of the great indraught or creek on the southern extremity of the coast of Florida.

Here we were again becalmed, and it is the most dangerous place at which vessels can possibly be so, in the whole gulf; for the tide sets you in at five knots an hour right amongst rocks and shoals, on which you are sure either to be wrecked or to be plundered by the pirates, who infest it. With great difficulty we avoided being sucked into this trap; and by day-light the next morning discovered from our mast head half a dozen small vessels putting off to us with all press of sail: had not a good breeze fortunately sprung up which gave our vessel seven knots, although being laden heavily with mahogany, she was a dull sailer, they would have been up with us. As we expected they would be so in the course of the day, we began to muster

our forces. I had taken upon myself the office of commander in chief as well as master of the ordnance: we mustered six muskets, but they were all rusty and out of order; two of them had no ramrods, three of them wanted flints, and the sixth had the pan broken. We had plenty of grape shot, and it was proposed to shower it well into the boats as they neared us, but the quantity of gunpowder, which was now got out with difficulty from under some of the mate's clothes and a profusion of bedding in one of the after births, was lamentably deficient.

When we had arranged our *materiel* in the best way we could, the captain and I retired into the cabin to hold a council of war: he, then, put to me a question of a very posing nature; for, observing, as he did with some calmness, that he knew nothing of the crew, "how do you know," said he, "that they will fight?" He gave me strong reason to suspect that they would not, and continued "they shall not

want an example, however, for fight I will to the last drop of my blood, because the pirates are sure to give me no quarter, and they will most probably—kill you."

When we had regained the deck, we saw a boat on our starboard bow, about six miles off, making up to us with two large lug-sails: as she neared us we perceived she was perfectly crammed with men. The captain began now to be quite serious in his determination; spoke kindly and in an encouraging way to the crew; and we were ready for action. The lugger passed a head, and then came close down on our larboard bow, within musket shot of us. Our two guns on this side were loaded with grape, rusty nails, and pieces of iron, and I had undertaken to fire the priming with a cigar which I was diligently smoking for the purpose. For fear they should not think the guns were actually loaded, we had placed two men out upon them, in order that they might be seen by the lugger's crew at a distance, as

occupied in ramming in well the charges they contained. Before coming up to us, she shortened sail: on her quarter deck she carried a large swivel brass gun; and, had she boarded us, she had hands enough to have destroyed our crew thrice over: but whether she did not like our warlike appearance, or whether, distracted from her intention by two large vessels now heaving in sight, she satisfied herself with passing us in dead silence, made sail and steered for the creek, where we had witnessed her companions in the morning.

The Margaret had all the appearance of a brig of war: she had six port-holes on each side, four of which were without guns, but were left open as pretending that the guns were withdrawn: another manœuvre also conduced, in all probability, to our safety on this occasion; for on nearing the lugger, we altered our course a point or two, as if with the desire of coming up with her, for, as we knew we could not escape, it was thought best to put on

an imposing attitude; and it was the general opinion that we owed our safety to the intimidation which we thus excited. For some minutes there was a silent pause: the crew stood gazing at the pirate, and then walked off quietly to their duty or their births. These fellows as I looked at them, I said to myself, must be English sailors, and no doubt they will fight:—for as every body knows, the bull-dog bites but seldom barks.

There was an Irishman at the helm, an active clever hand, with whom, in the tedious moonlight nights, whilst stretched along the bench on the side of the binnacle, I used to converse. The sailors called him the captain's own, they meant 'my cockswain,' but I called him Pat: he was the best seaman in the brig, and had great influence by his commanding person and ready wit in managing the politics of the forecastle. One of the crew, a little mutilated man, who had come on board, merely to get home to England and was

always on the sick list, although we had no doctor, had become mutinous, and the captain had requested me to get the matter settled by Pat's interference. Pat did the business like a statesman, for he carried the point of union; and at the same time relieved the weaker party from all penalties and disabilities, which, considering the unsatisfactory state of our physical resources, was so desirable, not to say necessary, for our preservation.

We had frequently, afterwards, occasions, when all hands were mustered, to perceive that the efforts of this individual were very useful; whilst it was remarked to his credit, that he never after shewed the least symptoms of disobedience.

In honour of our bloodless victory, the crew were regaled with some strong grog, which Pat was distributing from the bench behind the tiller, by the captain's special leave; for the sails were all full, and it was all plain sailing: the vessel was steered in the interim, by his protegé, the

little sailor, who came in for the dregs of the can, and then went merrily about his duty.

We did not get out of the gulf till the 31st, having been sixteen days embarked from Belize, fourteen out of which we were liable hourly to be attacked by the pirates. The chief nests of these miscreants are in the Isle of Pines, to the s. w. of Cuba, all along the north coast of Yucatañ and both sides of the whole length of the Gulf of Florida. The exertions of the North Americans to root out and destroy them cannot be sufficiently commended: they have effected much by means of small men-of-war steam-boats, whereby they have been enabled to follow them into the narrow creeks, whither they betake themselves for refuge, and to destroy many. The only other part where they have a secure lodgment is in the island of Puerto Rico; and from this, as well as the points above mentioned, they are constantly hovering about Belize and the Mosquito shores.

We understood that early in the present year, between seventy and eighty of them had been hung at Jamaica; but however laudable have been the exertions of his Majesty's vessels in their endeavours to suppress them, much yet remains to be done. It is only the Spaniards who allow of and harbour them in their territory. In the bay of Matanzas, to the east of the Havannah, and in various other parts of the Spanish dominions it is quite notorious that the authorities are in league with the pirates and share their nefarious gains.

On the 7th September we had made one fifth of the passage, dead reckoning; and the sailors were grumbling about shortness of provisions and the total consumption of the grog. I had given them the last bottle of brandy on the 1st of the month, and shared with them my live stock; of which there remained at present two goats and one pig—one pig we had already killed, and two others were washed overboard in the storm at Ambergris Quay. The feel-

ing however which I experienced at being out of the fell swoop of the pirates made all these difficulties light. On the 14th we came up with and boarded the Mary and Jane of Costine, Boston, and bought some beef and biscuit, which came to about five or six pounds sterling, and which we had some difficulty in making the master take. His name was Usher Dyer, bound for Martinique, with stores and provisions, but unfortunately he had not a drop of grog to spare.

19th. We were in lat. 39° 52′; long. 54° 58′, under a strong breeze, the sea running higher than, during my little nautical experience, I had ever seen. The next day was calm and the next a hurricane, in the midst of which we saw a brig bound to Newfoundland: she was within hail; but it was useless to hail her. Up to the 26th we had seen three brigs and a schooner, and this day, with a nine knot's breeze passed a ship close enough to read her log, but did not hail her. The next, we

spoke the Packet, New York, from Jamaica: she had lost her mizen mast in a gale on the 10th, and informed us that two ships for Liverpool had been plundered by pirates in the gulf. By 12 o'clock on the 5th we were about three leagues s. of Scilly; and after having experienced, the next day, off the coast of Cornwall, the greatest storm we had met with on the voyage, having very nearly been wrecked off the light-house,—we had a fine run up channel, and I landed at Deal at 7 o'clock in the evening of the 8th, arriving in London on the 9th, being that day two years that I had left the metropolis on the duties of the respective commissions to Mexico and Guatemala.

HISTORICAL

AND

STATISTICAL SKETCH

OF GUATEMALA.

Situation and Extent.—Rivers and Lakes.—Ports.—Political Considerations respecting Boundaries.—Boundaries of States.—Population.—Statement of the Births and Deaths in Guatemala, in 1823.—Prices of Provisions in the City of Guatemala.—Relative Population of the Republics.—Number and Wealth of Towns.—Santiago, the Capital.—Finance.—Commerce.—Considerations n the Nature and Value of Goods Imported into Guatemala and the other South American Republics.—Military Resources.—Communication within itself and with the Exterior.

SITUATION AND EXTENT.

THE geographical position of Guatemala is highly advantageous. Placed in the middle of the two Americas, between the Colombian and Mexican republics, it is bathed by the Atlantic and Pacific oceans,

and lies in the centre of the vast relations which now exist and may be hereafter opened between the old and new worlds. It is bounded on the west and north by Mexico, on the south-east by the province of Veraguas; on the south and south-west by the Pacific, and on the north by the Atlantic. Its figure is nearly triangular, and contains 16,740 square leagues, covering an area greater than that of either Peru or Chile. Its soil is of extraordinary variety as to quality, altitude, temperature and fruitfulness; and it yields, in consequence, all the productions of the frigid, temperate, and torrid zones.

RIVERS AND LAKES.

From its lofty mountains, which it is well known are a continuation of the grand Cordillera rising at Cape Horn and passing through Mexico into the centre of North America, flow down many rivers which empty themselves, some into the Atlantic and some into the Pacific ocean.

Towards the north run the Polochic, the Golfo, the Motagua, the Ulua, the Leon, the Aguan, the Simones, the Platanos, the Pantasina, the Mosquitos, the San Juan, the Camelicon, and the Tinto: towards the south run the Huista, the Tamala, the Acalapa, the Micatoya, the Esclavos, the Paz, the Asonsonate, the Lempa, the Viejo, the Nicaragua and the Nicoya.

By a royal ordinance of 30th March, 1795, the consulate were charged to effect the navigation of the Polochic and Motagua; the former of which empties itself into the Golfo Dulce, and the other into the Atlantic. Much has been said and written concerning the feasibility of those projects, the advantages of which would certainly be very great; but nothing has been yet attempted; and the hope and expectation now are, that some foreign capitalists will fix their attention on so important a subject; consulting thereby their own advantage as well as that of the republic.

The Ulua is said equally to merit the

notice of enterprising individuals: this beautiful river is at all times navigable for forty leagues from its mouth to the Barranco Colorado, and, in the rainy seasons, as far as Maniani, which is four leagues from the city of Comaiagua: the Aguan is also navigable to Olanchito.

The executive government being desirous of seeing a steam-navigation adopted in some or all of these rivers, ordered, on the 22d June, 1824, a despatch to be sent to their minister in the United States, authorizing him to receive proposals from the merchants of that country for carrying the same into effect.

There are many large lakes which at once ornament and fertilize this country: the Golfo Dulce of Honduras and the lake of Nicaragua, by which the water-communication between the two seas is in process of being adopted, are most worthy of attention. They are well calculated for the navigation of steam-vessels.

PORTS.

The ports of this republic are, in the north, Izabal, Omoa, Truxillo, San Juan, and Matina; and in the south, Nicoya, Realejo, Conchagua, Acajutla, Libertad, and that of Istapa, or of Independence; the last two being made free ports by decrees of the 6th and 10th of February, 1824. History relates that Alvarado, the Conqueror, constructed vessels at the bar of Istapa, and that this was for a long time the port of Guatemala, being only eighteen leagues distant from the ancient capital.

The port of Culebra, in the state of Nicaragua, is not yet made free, but it has been reconnoitred by two engineers, who thus report of it. "Two hundred ships ride in it with safety; at fifty yards from shore it has from ten to twelve fathoms water with a good sandy bottom; being surrounded by fine woods, with plenty of fresh water, and having close to it farms of neat cattle; it is a league and a half

wide at its mouth, and divided into three channels by some islands: the entrances are clear and deep, and its interior is sheltered from all winds."

POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS RESPECTING BOUNDARIES.

With regard to the boundaries of the territory of Guatemala, there are three questions of political interest, appearing to require some commentary or consideration; —namely, that relating to Mexico respecting Chiapa, that with the Colombian government respecting the south-east coast of Honduras, and that with Great Britain respecting the line of demarcation between the territories of that republic and His Majesty's colony at Belize:—as far as relates to the question of Chiapa, the boundary between the two republics of Mexico and Guatemala cannot, pending the unsettled state of that business, be attempted to be defined. I have mentioned the subject merely to state that the proceedings

which have been had between the parties, have been of a friendly nature, and that the greater part of the population of that state are favourable to their union with Guatemala, although the same is now included in the list of the states of Mexico.

The coast from Cape Gracias á Dios towards Chagre was said to have been claimed by Colombia, in consequence of the decree of San Lorenzo, of the 30th of November 1803, which joined it to Granada, and took it from Guatemala. It was pretended that the Colombians forced vessels to land at some port in Colombia before they should touch upon the coast in question: the Guatemalian Minister, Soza, in his Exposé of 1825, observes that this declaration greatly surprised his government; that the territory in question had always belonged to Guatemala; that, in the law decreed by the Chamber of Representatives of Colombia of the 23rd June 1824, upon the division of their country, the Mosquito coast is not comprehended;

and that, in the Note of the 29th July, with which the Minister of State accompanied the said decree to the Intendant of the department of Magdalena, it is definitively stated as not belonging to Colombia; and that, farther, the Guatemalian Envoy to Colombia, in his communication of the 28th September, says, with relation to the subject, that he has been assured that the Government of Colombia "had had no other idea than that of preventing the formation of establishments on the said coast." Nevertheless, the question has not yet been definitively arranged.

By a treaty dated Versailles, the 3rd of September 1786, British settlers were allowed the privilege of cutting mahogany and logwood on that part of the Honduras shore which now constitutes the colony of Belize. In the treaty alluded to, there is no sovereign right made over to his Majesty to that territory, and I have understood that the boundaries between that settlement and the then Spanish Colonies,

now constituting the Guatemalian Republic, were never properly defined. It is unnecessary to add, that Guatemala would be naturally desirous of giving every facility towards the final adjustment of such boundaries, especially with a nation whom they so much look up to and respect as they do Great Britain; and that, as far as they are concerned, they would not, of course, think of questioning any sovereign right, which, at any time or under any circumstances, might possibly be claimed by his Britannic Majesty to the territory alluded to, and which is of far greater importance as a depôt for the British trade with the American Republics than is generally supposed.

BOUNDARIES OF STATES.

Although the Assembly, by its act of the 1st of July 1823, had declared the independence, the states of Honduras, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica had not then been represented: their adhesion was, however, subse-

quently pronounced on the 1st of October 1824, and the 5th of March 1825;—from which time these three states, in conjunction with those of Guatemala and San Salvador, formed the FEDERAL REPUBLIC.

A new division of the territories of these states has been made so as to give to each a due portion of sea-coast. The accompanying map which I planned with Don José de Valle, and is now first printed, will best show their respective boundaries.

POPULATION.

There is no recent census of the population of Guatemala. The last was taken about twenty-two years ago: it was very inaccurate; but, nevertheless, with reference to it, and other later sources of information, the present population may be fairly stated as follows.

The capital of Guatemala, including the Alcaldias Mayores of Sucatepeque, Sonsonate, Escuintla, Suchitepeque, Chinaltenango, Sololá, Totomicapan and Vera

	Souls.	
Paz	630,000	
Add Chiquimula.....	110,000	
Quisaltenango	110,000	
In the State of Guatemala		850,000
In the State of Honduras.....		280,000
In the State of San Salvador ...		330,000
In the State of Nicaragua.....		330,000
In the State of Costa Rica		180,000
In the Ports of Truxillo, Omoa, Golfo, and Garrison of Peten		30,000
Total.....		2,000,000

Of this population about 50,000 reside in the capital, and about 140,000 in the four other capitals of the several states of the Federation.

	Souls.
In San Salvador	39,000
Leon.....	38,000
Chiquimula	37,000
Cartago	26,000
Total.....	140,000

From the various mixtures of blood it is difficult to class them, except very generally. When in Mexico, I saw fifteen different classifications of them represented in some pictures at an old chateau, which seemed to be so minute and curious that I copied the notes illustrative of each portrait *. For the present purpose, it may be sufficient to consider the proportions of the several classes to be as follows:—

Whites and Creoles.....One-fifth
Mixed Classes.....Two-fifths
Indians.....Two-fifths

Of Europeans, or perfect whites, there are not more than 5,000, so that they are in the proportion of five souls to 2,000, and this aggregate, with the exception only of the native Indians, may be merged in one general denomination of Mesties, or mixed. There are no slaves; and every individual enjoys equal civil rights.

It is true that the census above referred to, and which was taken in 1803, gives only

* See Appendix.

a population of one million: it is argued that it must have increased since that period at the rate of five per cent., and that therefore it must be doubled, especially as the small-pox has ceased its ravages, and as in other respects, the country has never, during the whole of that period, suffered either from plague or famine. I am inclined to concur with the opinion that the country is populating very fast; for not only in the towns but in the small villages, I could not help being struck with the numbers of young children. The following statement will shew that in the metropolis, the births for one year exceeded the deaths in the ratio of two to one.

STATEMENT OF THE BIRTHS AND DEATHS IN GUATEMALA IN 1823.

Parishes.	Births.			Deaths.		
	Men.	Women.	Total.	Men.	Women.	Total.
Sagrario	235	250	485	105	116	221
Candelaria ...	190	192	382	69	76	145
Remedios	180	196	376	113	138	251
S. Sebastian ..	159	149	308	59	53	112
Totals ...	764	787	1551	346	383	729

This great excess of the births over the deaths may in some measure be explained by the excellence of the food, the benignity of the climate, and perhaps the morality of the people, as compared with the population of most other large capitals. It is well known that there have been three capital cities all built in different places, as each former one was separately destroyed by earthquake.

	Inhabitants.
Guatemala, now styled Vieja, or Old, contains about	2,000
The Antigua, or Ancient, a most beautiful spot, about	18,000
The Nueva or New Capital, contains ..	50,000
Sundry Villages within five or six leagues of the Capital, say forty, with a population of 300 souls each	12,000
The City of Guatemala, with its vicinities, contains about.....	82,000

The annual consumption of beeves in the Nueva, or present capital, is nearly 1000 head; the proportion of swine killed is nearly the same; but scarcely any sheep are slaughtered, and mutton is only used on days of festivity or occasions of compliment; the flocks being valued and preserved chiefly on account of their wool, which is sold at an enormous profit, in the shape of coarse cloaks to the Indians, particularly in Nicaragua and San Salvador, at annual fairs which are held there,—in the latter province at the town of San Miguel, on Ash Wednesday and the 20th of

November, and in the former, at the town of Apastepeque on the 15th of September and the 2d and 31st of October.

Nevertheless, the supply of woollen goods on such occasions is not equal to the demand, and the Guatemalian shopkeepers are accustomed every year to take all their stock of similar articles to those marts, although they have thus to encounter the labour and expense of journeys of seventy and 160 leagues.

Provisions, with the exception of that kind eaten by the natives, and which consists of frixoles, or dried beans, maize and plantains, very cheap and almost their only nutriment, are dearer in Guatemala than perhaps most parts of Europe.

In a country so plentiful and so thinly peopled, this fact appears somewhat extraordinary, but perhaps it may be accounted for by the low state of agriculture and the comparative abundance of specie; to which it may be added that few cattle are bred in the neighbourhood of Guatemala, it being pretended that in the dry season

there is a deficiency of pasture: they are therefore mostly brought from parts at from thirty to fifty leagues distance.

In Sonsonate and other country places a fine fat ox is bought at from twelve to sixteen dollars, and it is retailed at about half a rial, or three pence, per pound.

PRICES OF PROVISIONS IN THE CITY OF GUATEMALA.

Beef and Pork .. 2 Rials, .. or Sterling 1s per lb.
Bread ..... 1 .... or ..... 6d do.
Poultry ..... from 3d to 6d each.
Cheese (very bad) ½ .... or .....3d per lb.
Butter ..... 1 .... or ..... 6d do.
Eggs ..... 1d each.
White Sugar .. 1 .... or ..... 6d per lb.
Brown Sugar .. ½ .... or ..... 3d do.
Rice ..... 1d do.
Salt ..... 1½d do.
Milk ..... 6d per quart.
Brandy of the country ..... 6d per bottle.
Do. Spanish ..... 2s. do.
Wine (made from wild, poor grapes of the country) ..... 1s. do.

It has been above stated that the territorial extent of Guatemala is greater than

that of Peru or Chile. Humboldt calculated it in 1809 at 26,152 square leagues, and in a subsequent statement at 16,700 square leagues. Taking it at this lowest calculation, its territory and population with respect to those two republics are as follow:

	Square leagues.	Population.
Guatemala	16,740	2,000,000
Peru	12,150	1,400,000
Chile	14,240	1,100,000

It is in fact, with respect to territory, the fourth in rank, and with regard to its relative population the most considerable of any of the South American states,—as will appear by the following statement.

RELATIVE POPULATION OF THE NEW REPUBLICS AS REGARDS THE NUMBER OF INHABITANTS TO THE SQUARE LEAGUE.

	Square leagues.	Population.	Inhabitants to the square league.
New Spain ..	75,830	6,800,000	89
Guatemala ..	16,740	2,000,000	119
Venezuela ..	33,700	900,000	29
Granada	58,250	1,800,000	
Peru.....	12,150	1,400,000	115
Chile	14,240	1,100,000	77
Buenos Ayres	126,770	2,000,000	15

NUMBER AND WEALTH OF TOWNS.

The five states, constituting the republic of Guatemala, are divided into forty five *partidos*, or districts, each having its capital or head settlement. These districts contain, besides the capitals, 253 minor towns and villages. I shall proceed to show the sources of wealth of the chief towns only, as those of the minor settlements may be supposed not to differ materially in their nature from the trade and productions of their respective capitals.

In the state of Guatemala are thirteen districts, the capitals of which, with their respective productions, are as follow:

Districts.	Towns.	Productions and Manufactures.
Sacaltepeque	Guatemala	Cochineal, cotton, ordinary cloths, fruits.
Chimaltenango	same name as district.	Wheat, maize.

Districts.	Towns.	Productions and Manufactures.
Solola.....	same name as district.	Neat cattle
Totonicapan ...	idem.....	Goats, wool, clothing of the same, wheat, many ordinary manufactures.
Gueguetenango	idem	idem, idem, and lead mines.
Quesaltenango..	idem	idem.
Suchitepequez	Mazatenango	Cocoa, cotton, cattle, woods.
Esçuintla....	same name as district	A little indigo, cattle, cotton.
Chiquimula	idem.....	Cattle, horses, mules, indigo, cotton.
San Agustin	idem.....	Idem, with achote, cocoa, wheat.
Vera Paz	Coban.	
Salama.....	Salama....	Sugar.
Pelen	Remedios.	

In the state of San Salvador are four districts, each bearing the same name as its respective capital.

Districts and Capitals.	Productions and Manufactures.
San Salvador....	Indigo, cochineal, cocoa, balsam, saffron, cattle, cotton cloths, embroidered bridles, palm nuts, all kinds of fruit, sugar, tobacco.
Sonsonate	Cotton, wheat, cotton cloths, indigo, cattle, hats, mats, sugar, all kinds of fruits and cattle for sale, artificial flowers of shell work, of which latter they export to the value of £10,000 per annum to Peru, Chile, &c.
San Miguel	Indigo, cochineal, hides, nets, hammocks, sacking of Mezcal or Maguay, cotton, silver-mines.
San Vincete	idem, with gold mines.

In the state of Honduras are twelve districts, each bearing the same name as its respective capital.

Districts and Capitals.	Productions and Manufactures.
Comaiagua	Gold, silver, copper and iron mines, neat cattle
Tegucigalpa.....	idem.
Choluteca	idem.
Macaome.....	idem.

Districts and Capitals.	Productions and Manufactures.
Cantaranas	Gold, silver, copper and iron mines, neat cattle.
Juticalpa	idem.
Gracias	Wheat, sugar, indigo, tobacco, precious stones.
Los Llanos	Tobacco.
Santa Barbara	Cattle.
Truxillo.	
Lloro	Cattle.
Segobia, (the capital of which is also called Somoto.)	Naphtha, cattle, tobacco, silver mines.

In the state of Nicaragua and districts, each bearing the same name as its respective capital.

Districts and Capitals.	Productions and Manufactures.
Leon	Indigo, woods, cattle.
Granada	idem, with cacao.
Managua	Indigo, wood, cattle, cacao.
Realejo	idem.
Sutiaba	idem.
Masaya	idem, with manufactories of hats and mats.
Nicaragua	Cacao.
Matagalpa	Wheat, cattle.

In the state of Costa Rica are eight districts, the respective capitals bearing the names of their districts, which are as follows:—San Jose, Cartago, Ujarras, Borrica, Iscan, Alajuela, Eredia, and Bagases.

The above notices combined with the statements I shall proceed to offer on the commerce of Guatemala, will it is hoped give not only some idea of the particular sources of wealth, but also of the relative importance of the principal towns of the republic. These towns contain, one with another, from 5000 to 12,000 inhabitants, exclusive of the five capitals of the several states, the population in which, we have seen, is about 190,000. Each of the federative states is engaged in forming its own statistical account; but that of San Salvador alone has been as yet completed.

From the foregoing particulars, it may be deduced that the productions common to the whole territory of Guatemala, and therefore the sources of the present and prospective wealth of its towns, are cochi-

neal, indigo, tobacco, cotton, wheat, maize and other esculent grain and fruits;—that it has some manufactures of an ordinary nature, and that in the sierras, or mountains, are many mineral and precious stones. The whole of the territory being uneven and mountainous, there is scarcely a district, however small, in which the fruits of different climates might not be cultivated with success. In the low and hot tracts, cacao, indigo, and cotton abound; in the high and cold, animals of the lanigerous kind are bred. In Sololá and other parts are manufactures of coarse woollen cloths for the consumption of the natives: finer cloths have been attempted, but, on account of the price or the expense of manufacture, the former only are in general use. Flax and hemp are produced plentifully, but no pains are bestowed on their cultivation, owing to the abundance of cotton, which does not require so much preparation for its manufacture.

SANTIAGO, THE CAPITAL.

Santiago de Guatemala, the capital, stands in the midst of a large handsome plain, surrounded on all sides by sierras of a moderate height, and at the distance of from three to seven leagues. These mountains which give to the whole view the valley of Mexico in miniature, are not so far off but that the eye may discover, through the rectilinear streets, in every direction, the verdure of the trees with which the surrounding heights are clad, and which, with the sloping meadow lands of different hues, affords a refreshing object, forming, as it were, a screen to the little city which lies in the midst, glaring with its white walls and domes and steeples of Yessa-cement in the rays of a tropical sun.

The houses are all built in quadras or squares of about 120 to 160 feet; and, sometimes, the front of one house occupies a whole quadra; but none of them exceed eighteen or twenty feet in height: of course

they are only of one story, a precaution not so much suggested by fear of earthquakes as enjoined by the old Spanish law.

The streets are neatly paved, either with common stones, or more generally with a gray-streaked marble, which makes them very slippery, and riding or driving very dangerous. They slope from each side towards the centre, along which runs almost perpetually a streamlet of clear water, the edges of which being covered with verdure give to the city a picturesque though deserted appearance. In some few of the streets there are trottoirs, particularly in the Plaza, or chief square, where they are covered with a colonnade extending all round the square, excepting on the side occupied by the cathedral: opposite to this is the palace, with the government offices; and, on the two other sides, are retail shops of all descriptions of dry goods; whilst the area is used as a market where the Indians come daily to sell their poultry, fruit, and other provisions. In the

centre is a fountain of excellent water, issuing from a crocodile's head of indifferent workmanship.

Many of the churches are large and of fine architecture. They are kept much cleaner and neater than they are at Mexico. A new one called the Pantheon, with spacious vaults for a cemetery under it, is just being completed in an expensive style, and another within fifty yards of it is being constructed for the use of the convent of Augustin nuns. Another large church newly erected at the west end of the city was opened and dedicated to St. Teresa on the 29th of May. The rest of the temples devoted to religion and the nature of their endowments have been already mentioned in the personal narrative.

Viewed at a distance, few cities present a more beautiful aspect than this, and, internally, though not strikingly pleasing, there is nothing in it, save a degree of dullness, that can excite absolute dislike. Its height above the level of the sea is about 1800

feet. The variation of temperature between the nights and days, so peculiar to the high table lands, is not found here: the mean heat from the 1st of January to the 1st of July is 75°, at night 63°: in the summer months the average may be taken at 10 degrees higher;—a moderate temperature for a city situated as this is in 14° 28′ north latitude, and 92° 40′ west longitude. The city of which I speak is the third capital which has existed within these last seventy-seven years. The original, which was erected at the declivity of the grand volcano, on the edge of a valley which fronted the Pacific, and contained about 7000 families, was destroyed by an earthquake in the year 1751. Being rebuilt a little further to the northward, in the romantic spot now called the Antigua, the same was destroyed, by a more tremendous convulsion, in 1775: although the greater part of the inhabitants were buried in the ruins, and the city was removed by order of the government to the spot on which it

now stands, which is twenty-five geographical miles to the northward of the Antigua, the latter is still a favourite place of resort: the congress of the state is held in it, and it has seldom a population of less than from 12 to 18,000 inhabitants. The present capital is frequently subjected to the shock of earthquakes, but being so far from the volcano, the inhabitants begin to lose all apprehension concerning them

FINANCE.

The policy which Old Spain has adopted towards Guatemala has been accompanied with effects of unintentional kindness in as far as regards the financial relations of their republic. With resources of an almost boundless nature, she has been taught to exist within a scale of very circumscribed economy. Being a captainship, and not a viceroyalty like Mexico, it was still less favoured than that country by the parent State, and was never allowed to export more of its native productions than were sufficient to pay for

the articles of commerce which the merchants of Cadiz thought necessary for its consumption. The scale of the public expenditure was kept down and limited in deference to that of the higher pretensions of the Mexican and other viceroyalties, and, as its financial wants were few, so the adequate resources were of easy collection and weighed comparatively lightly upon the people: it is also certain that, if the exchequer was not overflowing, it was not embarrassed with any considerable debt.

The political events, however, which immediately preceded the revolution, began to disorganize the tranquil and inert system of the public finance: the revenue began to decline by degrees, and, upon the installation of the national authorities in 1821, the whole system was labouring under a perfect state of paralysis. The tribute paid by the Indians had been suppressed, together with the taxes on cards and ice. In the imperial government which followed, violent hands were laid upon

the funds of the mint as well as upon many other resources which the exigencies of that unfortunate period seemed, with some degree of plausibility, to exact. Then, the constituent assembly suppressed the branch of income arising from bulls, that of fifths on gold and silver, that of the moiety of secular revenues, the duty upon passing goods of import and export through the garita, or customs guard-house, and that of two per cent. paid by the growers of tobacco.—The ordinary alcavala, or internal duty, was reduced from six to four per cent. the former rate having been exacted in the time of the Mexican government: national iron was made free of duty, and also, for five years, all kinds of warlike stores either for consumption or trans-shipment.

The abolition of these taxes, which was in pursuance of the decree of the 1st of December 1823, at the same time that it gave a decided impulse to national industry, left the treasury in a most impoverished state. The federative government obtained little

pecuniary aid from the several states of which it was composed, and, in fact, what it did receive, was solely from the state of Guatemala itself or from Honduras. The duty of seven per cent. on the clear value of all the ecclesiastical revenues was inconsiderable: those of stamps, post-office, and tobacco were newly organized by specific decrees, and a petition having passed from the government of the 2d of March 1824, for an increase of the duties on importation, the assembly decreed an augmentation of four per cent. To increase the difficulties which still wanted to be reformed, the states separated their revenues from those of the federal fund.

In February 1824, the executive power ordered a commission to be formed to settle and propose the best means for effecting a beneficial change in the state of the revenue, composed of a principal officer in each branch, assisted by one of the individuals of the executive. The result was that, out of all the rents, four items

only were destined by the assembly for the general expenses of the republic; namely, those of gunpowder, post-office, tobacco, and maritime alcavala. The first has been put upon a better regulation, so also has the post-office: fresh facilities for the cultivation of tobacco have been decreed by the law of the 21st of December 1824, and the collection of the maritime alcavala has been facilitated by fresh arrangements, including the appointment of several new officers of competent ability and zeal.

The minister of finance commences his report by candidly affirming that "It is not possible to fix the true value of the revenues on account of the disorders introduced into the administration, and, therefore although they may be taken as approximating to the truth, they must not be accounted as giving a precise statement of the riches of the country." He then proceeds to give some particulars or accounts of the alcavala and of the tobacco, with some notice of the tribute, now abolished,

and of the mint, subjoining a list of twenty-six other items of duty with the annual amount receivable from each, and concludes with an abstract statement of the annual expenditure and a short account of the public debt.—To render this account practically available for the elucidation of the present system of the receipt and expenditure of Guatemala, it is necessary to advert to the fact that, for the general expenses of the republic, only four items of duty are available; and these must be separated from the others which are applicable only to the wants of the respective states in which they are collected. Thus the financial system is divided into two heads: there is the general system of the federation, and the individual systems of each respective state. With regard to the latter, it is not possible to deduce any accurate results: each of the five portions of the federation passes its laws for its own internal guidance, raises its own revenues, and regulates its disbursements. The

amount of the whole of the duties receivable by the several states, according to the tariff of the minister of finance is 173,564 dollars, six rials, the gunpowder duty and post-office having been deducted. In order to see whether this sum is likely to supply the necessary demands of the several states to which it applies, it is desirable to revert to the value of the duties collected on the same articles, under the Spanish government.

From an historical sketch of the revenue made up to the year 1818, giving an account of the nature, origin, and then-produce of each item, it should appear that the common and particular branches of revenue corresponding with those referred to by the minister of finance, produced on the average of the five years ending 1817, viz.—

	Dollars.	Rials.		
Common Branches.	462,944	1½		
Deduct				
Alcavalas...	157,681	5		
Gunpowder ..	3,872	1		
	161,553	6		
			301,390	3½
Particular Branches ...	313,330	2		
Deduct; Tobacco.....	256,975	2		
			56,355	
		Total	357,745	3½

If therefore, as it is fair to expect, the country shall begin to feel the benefit of the liberal institutions it has adopted with regard to trade and other objects likely to conduce to its advancement, its revenue must naturally increase, and it may be reasonably presumed that the above sum of 357,745*d.* 3½*r.* which was collected by the old régime is not greater than what may be expected to be obtained by the several federal states under their own dispositions of government; and, should it be the case, the same might, perhaps, be fully adequate to the expenses which they

may incur in their respective administrations.

The general financial system of the federation is next to be considered; and, although it has been before observed, no direct statement or abstract of this branch has been presented by authority or in any public manner, it would be fortunate for any country if its account could be rendered with equal facility. There is an old national domestic debt, of which an explanation is given by the minister of finance, amounting to 1,825,189 dollars; for the redemption of which, however, there should appear by his statement to be ample funds. There is now a small debt, of course, arising from that portion of the loan which has been realized with the house of Barclay and Co., which was intended to the amount of 7,142,857 dollars; and should any further sums be raised they ought hardly to be calculated by their arithmetical amount, as they would tend to consolidate the new system of a government which has been

able to establish and maintain itself almost without any pecuniary assistance whatever: the whole loan which has been received by Guatemala from this country, does not exceed £100,000 sterling.

The expenses of the federal administration for the year 1825, were calculated as follow, viz.—

	Dollars.
Expenses of the ministry of state	54,950
Do. of justice and ecclesiastical affairs	17,600
Do. of finance	178,208
Do. of war and marine	627,828
Total Expenditure.....	878,586

The estimated income was, viz.—	Dollars.
Regular duties	530,000
Provisional quota	188,000
Novena decimals	88,888
Total Income	806,888
Expenditure excess	71,698

This excess of expenditure over the receipts, or estimated income, was so inconsiderable as to render it doubtful whether it were wise or expedient for the govern-

ment to contract any loan at all. As I have just observed, they have, from untoward and unprecedented circumstances which affected the monied interests of Great Britain at the time the loan which they anticipated was about to be realized, learnt to do without one. I am, however, strongly of opinion that they ought to raise a small sum, say about two millions sterling, as soon as circumstances will permit, to retain the consequence and solidity which they have already acquired against the innovations of domestic enemies, who would not probably have ventured to molest them, had they been fortified with the means which they had expected. The small amount which has been already advanced on Barclay's loan has been usefully applied in payment of the army, defence of the ports, and other objects of pressing, national importance. Looking at the financial affairs of the republic in this flattering point of view, we can hardly forbear from drawing a comparison between it and some of

the neighbouring republics. The expenditure of Mexico in 1823 was 9,481,782 dollars; that of Guatemala 878,586: supposing then the population of the latter, taking it at the lowest possible calculation, to be 1,600,000 souls, and the population of Mexico to be 6,800,000, it would result that each individual in Mexico would pay eleven rials, and each one in Guatemala four rials for their contributions to their respective governments. The expense of the Colombian government, in 1824, was 12,703,818 dollars, of which eleven-twelfths were for the army and navy: the proportion for the same service in Guatemala was about nine-twelfths of its general expenditure.

COMMERCE.

The Report furnished by the Government on the state of their trade was, in many respects, more satisfactory as being more clear and specific than some of their other documents. The inquiries of the

Commission appointed for this purpose were called to the state of the trade for the five years preceding their independence, to the five years subsequent to that event, and to the probable progress which it might be expected to make for the future. The result of this inquiry has been that, previous to the independence, the trade, owing to the confusion arising from political events, "was very indifferent," that "from the independence to 1825, it may be considered to have increased to double," and they add that "in order to calculate the progress it may make for the future, it is only necessary to raise the veil to the grand picture which presents itself to the world, of a country possessing in its bosom the richest elements of commercial productions, with its own government, with its liberal institutions, and with a general desire of applying itself to those useful labours by which the commerce of nations has always flourished."—They remark that their commerce with Spain consisted almost entirely

in their two staple articles of indigo and cochineal: of the former they used to export at one time 8,500 tercios, to the value of upwards of 2,000,000 dollars annually, taking in exchange the goods of the Peninsula;—it being so regulated that the import of goods from Spain should not be allowed to exceed the value of the indigo or other articles exported. In the five years previous to the independence, these exports are said to have been reduced to one half, or were at the rate of 1,000,000 dollars annually. They had already, in 1825, regained the maximum to which they had risen in their most flourishing times, previous to the independence, viz. of 2,000,000 of dollars annually, and reasons were urged for supposing that in the course of a short time the annual export of this article would increase to more than 5,000,000.

The report then takes a cursory view of the other staple branches of commerce, affixing in some instances the estimated value of the articles exported, and, in

others, omitting them altogether.—To supply this deficiency, and in order to arrive at some practical result as to the probable value of their trade, I will here divide the articles above alluded to in the Report under two heads;—viz. those to which a value is affixed by the Commission and those to which no value is affixed, supplying the deficiency in the latter case by other documents and sources of information that have fallen into my way, and more particularly by one which was furnished me by Don Juan Mayorga, the minister at Mexico, purporting to be the value of "articles of barter or consumption of Guatemala." From these data the present state of the value of the trade of Guatemala may be thus represented:—viz.

Value of particular Articles as stated in the Report of the Commission employed by the Guatemalian government.

	Dollars.	
Indigo, value of exports in 1824	2,000,000	
Do. of goods imported in exchange	2,000,000	
		4,000,000
Cochineal, estimated value of export in 1825.....	2,500,000	
Do. of goods imported in exchange	2,500,000	
		5,000,000
Balsam, estimated value of export in 1825.....	195,000	
Do. of goods imported in exchange	195,000	
		390,000
Hides, value of exports, in 1824	30,000	
Do. of goods imported in exchange	30,000	
		60,000
In all, the value of particular articles as stated in the Report of the Commission employed by the Guatemalian government.....		9,450,000

Articles stated in the Report of the Commission, but against which no values were therein affixed, and therefore assumed from other data—viz.

	Dollars.	
Gold and silver	1,000,000	
Sarsaparilla	12,000	
Papalillo	10,000	
Coffee	3,000	
Cotton	500,000	
Cacao	1,500,000	
Tobacco	200,000	
Sugar	50,000	
Pepper	10,000	
Grain	100,000	
Medical drugs	85,000	
Pitch and tar	5,000	
Neat cattle	20,000	
Iron	30,000	
Lead	10,000	
Value of exports of above articles		3,535,000
Value of goods imported in exchange		3,535,000
In all the value of articles stated in the Report of the Commission, but against which no values being affixed, the same are herein assumed from other data		7,070,000
Total value of the import and export trade of Guatemala		16,520,000

equal, at 4s per dollar, to £3,304,000.—According to the report of the government, the value of foreign goods imported is £1,652,000 sterling, and half of this being put down as British produce, would make the value of our exports £826,000: this, however, is far from correct: the value of them is double that amount. In the colony of Belize alone, a settlement which may one day become a most valuable entrepôt for all the more immediate points of the Spanish Main, and including, of course, the rising republic of Guatemala, there is a capital little short of two millions sterling employed at the present day. It is to this colony that the Guatemalian merchants come to make their purchases; and owing to the facilities thus offered by its situation, as well as on account of the duties of introduction being so much lower into that republic than they are at Mexico,—being in the proportion of about sixteen to seventy per cent.—it follows, necessarily,

that Guatemala is much better supplied with British goods than is Mexico.

Recapitulation of the Trade of Guatemala.

Trade from and to Jamaica.

Value imported by Guatemalian merchants		350,000
Do. smuggled into Omoa and Nicaragua		100,000
Profit to Jamaica merchants, ten per cent		45,000
Total imported into Guatemala from Jamaica		£495,000
Value of returns in indigo and cochineal, for British goods imported by Guatemalian merchants	350,000	
Do. do. for British goods smuggled	100,000	
Total exported from Guatemala into Jamaica		450,000
Total value of the trade from and to Jamaica		£945,000

Trade from and to Belize.

Value of dry goods imported by British merchants	1,500,000

Profits of British merchants, ten per cent. on do.		150,000
Total imported into Belize....		*£1,650,000
Indigo and Cochineal, exported by British merchants, the value in return for dry goods	1,500,000	
Additional value of Guatemalian produce, over and above the value of dry goods	200,000	
Value of mahogany.....	400,000	
Total exported from Belize.....		2,100,000
Total value of the trade from and to Belize		£3,750,000

So that the value of the trade of Guatemala is

With Jamaica.....	945,000
With Belize, the entrepôt of Guatemala.....	3,750,000
Total....	£4,695,000

The trade of Belize has increased very

* It is curious to observe how this sum, furnished from particulars by merchants at Belize, agrees with that stated in the Report of the Guatemalian Commission, page 486.

much, within these few years, owing to the establishment of commission houses: some of them are in the habit of receiving monies which had been destined for the Havannah and the United States; and this intercourse will be larger as the facilities of exporting Guatemalian produce may increase. The bar at the entrance of the Golfo Dulce is the chief cause why Belize is valuable as an entrepôt. It is by this medium that goods being reshipped, are passed to and from Guatemala in vessels, calculated for the purpose, and which must not draw more than seven or eight feet water.

CONSIDERATIONS ON THE NATURE AND VALUE OF GOODS IMPORTED INTO GUATEMALA AND THE OTHER SOUTH AMERICAN REPUBLICS.

When I left Guatemala at the end of the year 1825, I made out an estimate of the trade which was carried on by the new republics with all parts of the world

and the proportion of that trade which was then enjoyed by Great Britain. Subsequent information which I have obtained on these points, has induced me to think that statement as near to the truth as in subjects of so complicated a nature it is reasonable to expect.

It is supposed, and not improperly, that about one half of the merchandize imported into Guatemala is British, and it consists chiefly of broad cloth, all kinds of cotton goods, hard ware and other dry goods. The Spanish as well as the French have the principal trade in silks, glass, and trinkets; also in wines and spirits; but the latter are imported very sparingly, on account of the expense of bringing them up from the coast, which raises the price of them nearly fifty per cent. There are also introduced, by the port of Sonsonate, great quantities of crapes and other China goods, which are, in fact, so common amongst the middle orders as to lose all pretensions to the estimation in which they

are held in Europe. British goods are sold, here, very cheap, not, perhaps, all charges included of freight, commission, duties, &c. above thirty per cent. higher than they can be purchased at the respectable retail shops in London. The fall in their prices as compared with those at which they sold before the ports were opened, or when the Spaniards had the monopoly, is excessive: they may, in most cases, be bought for less than one tenth of the former price. This advantage has been taken from the Spanish monopolist and given to the free trader as well as to the people of the country, who consume more European manufactures in one year than they probably did, before the revolution, in a century.

Alluding to the estimate which I made in 1825, it would appear that the value of goods exported from Great Britain to the new republics might be then taken at about ten millions sterling per annum: The amount at present, in 1829, is about twelve millions.

From official returns, the value of the exports from Great Britain into the new republics, in 1824, was—

To Brazil	£3,425,324	
To Spanish America.....	2,377,110	
In all		5,802,434
To the West Indies	4,622,804	
To Foreign West Indies	1,702,198	
	6,325,002	
Deduct as proportion not sent to the new republics, say,.....	2,127,436	
Remains.....		4,197,566
Total Exports from Great Britain to the new republics in 1824		£10,000,000

which was the presumed annual consumption in those republics of British and Irish manufacture and of foreign and colonial merchandize.

Estimated value of goods exported from all countries into the South American Republics.—

The value of the export trade from France to those republics, according to the Exposé of the French minister, of May 1825, was sixteen millions of francs, equal in sterling to £666,666

The value of goods exported from the United States, exclusive of British produce and manufacture shipped from them, say, ...	3,333,334
Exported from Spain, Germany and other parts of the continent of Europe, say,.....	4,500,000
Exported from China and East Indies	1,500,000
In all exported from all parts (exclusive of Great Britain) to the new republics of America.....	£10,000,000

in the following proportions:

Great Britain exports to those republics	20-40ths
France.....	2-40
United States.....	6-40
Spain, Germany, and other parts	9-40
China, about	3-40

Let us now consider the state of the trade as it exists in the present year, 1829.

Previously to the sailing of the British Commission to Mexico, which was the first that proceeded to those countries, the whole export trade to Mexico, from Great Britain, in 1822, amounted only to £90,692 sterling. In 1825, during the period of

the Commission, it reached to £1,409,356. To Colombia, in 1822, the exports were only £27,572, and in 1825 they amounted to £651,103. In Buenos Ayres, in 1822, they were £230,839, and in 1824 they rose to £1,581,774.*—Between 1822, the period at which the Missions were first sent out, and 1827, including the year of stagnation of 1825, the total exports of Great Britain to those countries have increased, from £3,990,344 in 1822, to £6,602,163, making a difference, in favour of Great Britain, between our exports in 1822 and 1827, of £2,611,819 sterling.—The aggregate amount of the exports from 1823 to 1827, five years, was £32,875,855, making the annual average of direct exports £6,575,171. Now, the expenses of the Commissions and Consulships for these five years, never exceeded, on the average, £70,000 per annum*; they consequently amounted, for that period, to £350,000, leaving a benefit

* See Appendix.

to Great Britain of upwards of £6,000,000 sterling; — whilst the expense has been seven pounds in six hundred,—a little more than one per cent., on the advantages which our country has derived from the employment of the manufacturing interest, which was then anxiously looking out for fresh sources of external trade. I say nothing of the increased exports from those countries, whilst a proper confidence existed between us; but which was unfortunately shaken, by the crisis of 1825;—neither would I add, might it not be unknown to some of my readers, that full half of the trade to the Old Spanish Main is carried on through the West India Islands and Belize: Lord Liverpool knew the fact well, and stated it in his speech, in the House of Lords, on the 5th of February, 1822;—when his lordship also truly remarked that, out of forty-two millions of the British exports, seventeen millions were taken by America*. From the above data the export

* "The greater part of the increase in our commerce and manufactures, during the last year,

trade to South America, direct and indirect, may at present be estimated at from ten to twelve millions—A SIXTH PART OF SUCH EXPORTS IS TAKEN BY GUATEMALA,—not by the direct trade as entered at the British Custom-house, but through Belize, Jamaica, the Havannah, and even the United States.—It also appears beyond doubt that the *direct* British trade to South America has already increased nearly twofold, by means of the new connexions formed with these republics.

MILITARY RESOURCES.

A country, which has never been engaged against a foreign enemy in active warfare, cannot be expected to possess a large military force. The army of Guatemala was never, like that of Colombia and others of the new independent states, compelled to take the field, in any considerable manner, against the forces of the Mo-

was to be placed to the account of NORTH and SOUTH AMERICA, chiefly the latter."—*Speech of the Marquess of Lansdowne, 5th February*, 1822.

ther Country: the battles fought for its independence were merely with the neighbouring states; and, previously to its organization as a republic, the horrors of war and bloodshed never visited the tranquil plains of Santiago, excepting in the few skirmishes that took place during the time in which Iturbide attempted to urge his unjust pretensions, and endeavoured to unite the captaincy of Guatemala to the Viceroyalty of Mexico, to constitute his empire. Its military enterprise was then divided into two factions; one in favour of absolute independence, and the other subservient to the views of that would-be despotic chief: the result of that contest has proved creditable to the prowess of those leaders who were animated by the views of liberty, and shows that the troops, who shared their sentiments, were able to compete with numbers larger than their own, and, ultimately, to expel them from the field of action.

The general state of the military defence

of Guatemala may be best gathered from the official report of the government.—This report observes that "the north coast is defended by the strong garrisons of Omoa, Truxillo, the Gulf, and San Carlos,—all being perfectly furnished with artillery; and having respectable forts and batteries at all the points of disembarkation. In the south," (it adds,) "there are some points defended; and if they are not so, it is because those of the northern coast have the rather called the attention of the government, as being more open to any premeditated invasion on the part of the Spaniards; but both in one and the other, the means of defence are very considerable." It argues that "the first enemy that the European has to encounter is the climate," and that "if he should, by chance, get possession of the fortresses, and try to push his way into the interior, he would meet with obstacles innumerable; a country mountainous and rugged, facilitating ambuscade, and offering to light troops the ready means of act-

ing with success, agreeably to the nature of their manœuvres, against the advances of a more numerous and respectable force."

The systematic organization of the army is not yet completed. Its numerical strength in 1825 was stated as follows:—

Permanent troops as decreed by the legislature	1,800 men
Regular militia, including artillery, infantry, and cavalry	10,730
Civic militia	10,000
Total	22,530

Some corps of the regular militia are usually stationed in the vicinities of the coast, and could place themselves in a few hours in the maritime forts: I saw several of these troops in the various parts of the country through which I travelled: they appeared to be light active men, and well suited to endure the privations which they would necessarily have to experience in guerilla-warfare; the only mode in which, I should presume, they could be expected

to encounter any regular invading army. They are usually dressed in white or coloured cotton or nankeen jackets and trowsers, with broad-brimmed hats made of straw or other light material: their arms and other equipments are very indifferent: their muskets are of various calibres, and many of them are almost unserviceable: of course, their whole appearance is very far from soldier-like.

The cavalry horses are small but very active and hardy and well adapted to the country: they are never curried or cleaned, and scarcely ever shod. The body of civic or local militia purports to include every male citizen from the age of eighteen to forty-five years: as the population is estimated at two millions, the number of individuals liable to serve in that militia should amount, on an average, to about 250,000: the fact, however, is that, according to the latest returns made up previously to my leaving the country, the actual number enlisted did not exceed 10,000 men. This

civic or local militia is raised and equipped by the several states, and its disposition is under the control of their respective governments. The number of regular troops voted by the legislature may appear to be very small, but it has proved itself sufficient for the purpose of supporting the privileges and authority of the government throughout the internal disturbances with which the republic has been recently assailed.

When the supreme executive power was established, the army consisted of only two veteran companies of artillery, each of 120 men: the infantry was reduced to a fixed battalion of five corps, comprehending, in all, 565 men. There were also the fixed or permanent garrisons in Omoa, Truxillo, San Carlos, and Peten, amounting, together, to as many more. Thus the veteran force, on the declaration of the independence, amounted to about 1,400 men; small, indeed, for supporting the sovereign rights of a nation; but the supreme government

had a powerful succour in its militia, which was composed of three companies of artillery, six battalions of infantry and thirty light infantry companies, which made, altogether, a force of about 10,000 men.

The fixed battalion was disbanded by a decree of the constitutional assembly, in consequence of a sedition which took place on the 15th of September 1823; and the artillery company, then in the city, were also disembodied, for having joined in that disturbance. On the 17th of December of the same year, the assembly passed a decree for augmenting the national army with 1800 men: though aware of the necessity of raising this force without delay, they considered that it would be imprudent to do so without being possessed of the pecuniary means of maintaining it; and if, on the one hand, they felt how much the cause of independence might suffer from the want of a disposable military force, they were, on the other, alive to the dangers to be apprehended from such

a body, in case the necessary supplies should not be provided for its support. Nevertheless, early in the following year, 1824, the executive ordered a light battalion to be organized with the title of "Defenders of the Independence."

There are few officers who can lay claim to military prowess, for they have had little opportunity of evincing it, excepting, however, Colonel Arze, a relation of the president, Colonel Arzu, chief of the mathematical college, and above all the president himself.

The rate of military pay is low with regard to the prices of provisions and necessaries of life. There are two national powder-mills; one at the Antigua, and the other on the banks of the river Vacas: in the former alone is manufactured all the powder requisite for the service of the state.

The flag of the national ports and vessels consists of three horizontal stripes; the bottom and top blue, and the centre white; in the latter of which is the shield of the

arms of the republic; composed of an equilateral triangle, and, at the base, a cordillera of five volcanoes, placed upon a territory bounded by two seas, the upper part being encircled by a rainbow, having in its centre the cap of liberty, from which rays of light are emanating: around the triangle is written in gold letters "ESTADOS FEDERADOS DE CENTRO-AMERICA." The banners and standards of the permanent militia are similar to the above: the stripes are horizontal: in the centre one is placed the shield; in the upper one the words "GOD, UNION, AND LIBERTY", and in the inferior one the class and number of each corps.

Guatemala has no naval force; a moderate one for the protection of its coasts against pirates and smugglers would be desirable, and should they raise a small loan they would, no doubt, apply a portion of it to this object.

COMMUNICATION WITHIN ITSELF AND WITH THE EXTERIOR.

The exterior communications of the republic are chiefly carried on, in the Atlantic, by the port of Izabal in the Golfo Dulce, and the ports of Omoa and Truxillo, and, in the South Sea, by the ports of Iztapa, Acajutla, and Realejo.

The following are the distances to and from the more particular points of the republic.

	Leagues.
From Santiago, the capital of Guatemala,	
To San Salvador, the capital	70
To Ciudad Real, the capital of Chiapa	124
To Comayagua, the capital of Honduras	161
To Leon, the capital of Nicaragua	215
To Cartago, the capital of Costa Rica	397
And from the latter to David in South America	173
To Oaxaca, in Mexico	266
To Mexico	371
To Izabal, the port of the Golfo Dulce	76
To Omoa, the chief port in the Atlantic	165
To Truxillo, port of Honduras	242

	Leagues.
To Iztapa, the old port of Guatemala, and the nearest port of the South Sea.....	31
To Acajutla, chief port of San Salvador, in the South Sea.....	48
To Realejo, chief port of Nicaragua, in the South Sea	195
To port San Juan, Nicaragua, near to where it is proposed to open the canal into the South Sea.....	245

Although the means of correspondence existing between one place and another may be sufficient for carrying on the general routine of national or individual concerns, still there are many difficulties to be overcome before the roads can be made properly serviceable for an extensive domestic or foreign trade.

The bounty of nature and the indolence arising from the apathy in which the people have been purposely kept by the old government, have induced them to put up with many privations, which, by a little reasonable exertion, they might avoid.

Maize which is sold in Quesaltenango, a province of Guatemala, for from four to

six rials a bushel, once happened to cost in San Salvador from sixteen to twenty-four dollars;—a profit of 3100 per cent. was not thought a sufficient inducement to carry this commodity a hundred leagues.

This fact may appear to be at variance with one which I have elsewhere stated relative to the conveyance of goods thrice a year, by native merchants, from the capital to fairs held at even a greater distance than that just alluded to;—but, if the difficulty of conveying merchandize be so appalling, the fact of that domestic intercourse explains a question of some political interest;—it proves the avidity with which the middle and lower classes indulge themselves in those European articles of comfort, which, since the abolition of the high duties that had hitherto prevailed, it has fallen within the compass of their ability to purchase.

APPENDIX.

LIST

OF

The Deputies of the Federal Congress,

29TH MAY, 1825.

STATE OF GUATEMALA.

For what place.	*Names.*	*Profession.*
Guatemala.	Mariano Galvez.	A Doctor of Laws; a man of respectability and talents; one of the best orators in the Congress. Ministerial.
Sacatepeque.	Francisco Carascal.	An Ecclesiastic. Opposition.
	Doroteo Vasconcelos.	Recently Clerk in the Ministry of Relations.
Totonicapan.	Manuel Lara.	Opposition.
	Juan Montufar.	Captain of Militia; a man of respectability. Ministerial.
Chimaltenango.	Jose Maria Echeveria.	Large fortune. Ministerial.
	Domingo Diegues.	Counsellor and landed proprietor. Ministerial.
Gueguetenango.	Mariano Cordova.	Counsellor. Ministerial.
Quezaltenango and Suchiltepeque.	Francisco Flores.	Formerly a Schoolmaster. Opposition.
	Carlos Galvez.	Opposition.
	Esteban Lorenzana.	Opposition.
Soconusco.	Manuel Pavon.	Counsellor; of good talents, and great respectability. Ministerial.

For what place.	*ames.*	*Profession.*
San Augustin.	Ramon Solis.	Ecclesiastic; very respectable. Ministerial.
Escuintla.	ose Maria Ponce.	Land-proprietor. Ministerial.
Salama.	Jose Francisco Cordova.	Counsellor; good talents; very respectable. Ministerial.
Coban.	Jose Maria Castillo.	Canon; good talents; very respectable. Ministerial.

STATE OF SAN SALVADOR.

San Salvador.	Ciriaco Villacorte.	Counsellor. Opposition.
	Carlos Salazar.	Counsellor. Doubtful.
	Igenio Sanches, in lieu of D. Isidro Menendez, elected Senator.	Ecclesiastic. Opposition.
San Vicente.	Mariano Funez.	Opposition.
	Juan Antonio Fuentes.	Opposition.
Sonsonate.	Juan Manuel Rodrigues.	Opposition.
	Jose Antonio Peña.	Ecclesiastic. Opposition.
San Miguel.	Bacilio Porras.	Merchant. Ministerial.

STATE OF HONDURAS.

Olancho.	Francisco Guell.	Land-proprietor. Ministerial.
Gracias.	Santiago Milla.	Counsellor; very respectable. Ministerial.

STATE OF NICARAGUA.

Nicaragua.	Toribio Arguello.	Land-proprietor. Ministerial.
Masaya.	Francisco Benavent.	Apothecary. Ministerial.
	Jose Francisco Pacheco.	Opposition.
	——— Quiñones.	Physician; very respectable. Ministerial.

STATE OF COSTA RICA.

For what place.	*Names.*	*Profession.*
Costa Rica.	Pablo Alvarado.	Doubtful.
	Policarpio Bonilla.	Merchant; very respectable. Ministerial.

N.B. The Ministerialists were called *Moderados*, or *Moderatists*, the Oppositionists *Fiebres*, or *Feverists*. Without prejudice to the talents and abilities of those Members, against whose names no observation appears, the characters of the others have been here noted according to the current opinion then existing with regard to them. That this opinion was true, in a political sense, is seen by reference to the State of St. Salvador, in which the opposition to the Government has, unfortunately, led to the fatal disturbances with which the republic has incessantly been, more or less, agitated, since the period when this list was made out.

The state of parties was then as follows:

Ministerialists	17
Oppositionists	12
Doubtful	4
Total	33

The expected dissolution of Congress will give a sway to the party which may get the better of the other in the existing struggles; and it is to be confidently expected, that the Government of Guatemala will then be finally settled on a firm and solid basis.

TABLE OF LEVELS

BETWEEN

THE LAKE OF NICARAGUA AND THE SOUTH SEA.

TABLE of 347 LEVELS, taken by the water-level, at the average distance of about 100 yards each, between the SOUTH SEA and the LAKE OF NICARAGUA, beginning at the former and ending at the latter; shewing the greatest height of the lake as compared with the Descents and Heights of land between the two points in question;—the same being executed agreeably to the directions of the Captain-General of the kingdom of Guatemala, Don Mathias de Galvez.

Descents of Land below the Lake.					Heights of Land above the Lake.		
Number of Levels.	Distance, in Yards, at which each Level was taken.	Feet.	Inch.	Lines.	Feet.	Inch.	Lines.
1	100	4	5	5	..	..	..
2	100	4	2	..	..	..	..
3	100	..	11	6	..	..	..
4	100	..	..	..	..	1	..
5	100	2	4	..	..	..	..
6	100	..	..	..	9	6	4
7	100	4	3	3	..	..	..
8	100	3	3	4	..	..	..
9	100	..	..	..	..	..	4
10	100	..	5	..	..	..	..
11	100	..	..	..	2	5	4
12	100	..	..	..	..	9	..
13	100	..	2	3	..	..	..
14	100	1	9	2	..	..	..
15	100	..	7	9	..	..	..
16	100	..	..	..	..	2	4
17	100	1	4	..	..	..	..
18	100	..	..	..	..	1	8
19	100	..	..	..	2	8	1
20	75	..	6	10	..	..	..

Descents of Land below the Lake.					Heights of Land above the Lake.		
Number of Levels.	Distance, in Yards, at which each Level was taken.	Feet.	Inch.	Lines.	Feet.	Inch.	Lines.
21	100	..	..	..	1	3	2
22	100	3	3	..	..	..	..
23	49	..	..	..	..	4	7
24	75	..	10	3	..	..	..
25	100	..	..	6	..	..	..
26	100	..	..	..	..	11	10
27	100	..	..	..	1	10	3
28	100	..	..	..	3	6	6
29	100	..	..	..	2	9	2
30	100	..	..	..	..	..	6
31	100	..	..	..	..	2	2
32	100	1	..	..	..	..	..
33	100	1	7	..	..	..	..
34	100	..	10	7	..	..	..
35	100	..	9	..	..	..	..
36	100	..	11	..	..	..	..
37	100	1	4	6	..	..	..
38	100	..	7	..	..	..	..
39	100	..	7	4	..	..	..
40	100	..	5	..	..	..	..
41	100	..	..	8	..	..	..
42	100	..	6	..	..	..	..
43	100	1	1	10	..	..	..
44	100	..	10	..	..	..	..
45	100	1	5	7	..	..	..
46	100	1	4	8	..	..	..
47	100	..	10	..	..	..	..
48	100	1	1	..	..	..	..
49	100	..	..	9	..	..	..
50	100	1	1	..	..	..	..
51	100	..	8	..	..	..	..
52	100	..	2	10	..	..	..
53	100	..	1	..	..	..	..
54	100	..	1	1	..	..	..
55	100	1	6	..	..	..	..
56	100	1	5	..	..	..	..
57	100	..	10	..	..	..	..
58	100	..	..	..	..	..	3
59	100	2	..	..	..	..	..
60	100	3	7	6	..	..	..
61	100	2	2	..	..	..	..
62	115	..	..	..	6	4	4
63	132	1	4	4	..	..	..
64	100	..	..	..	..	..	9
65	100	1	..	6	..	..	..
66	100	1	..	3	..	..	..
67	100	..	1	10	..	..	..

Descents of Land below the Lake.					Heights of Land above the Lake.		
Number of Levels.	Distance, in Yards, at which each Level was taken.	Feet.	Inch.	Lines.	Feet.	Inch.	Lines.
68	100	..	1	6	..	..	..
69	100	1	7	8	..	..	..
70	100	4	1	6	..	..	..
71	100	4	7	..	..	..	..
72	100	..	8	5	..	..	..
73	100	..	..	..	..	1	8
74	100	2	6	6	..	..	..
75	100	..	..	..	..	2	2
76	100	5	2	..	..	..	..
77	100	..	..	..	1	7	2
78	100	..	..	..	..	5	..
79	100	2	7	1	..	..	..
80	100	..	..	..	1	..	2
81	100	1	1	..	..	..	..
82	100	..	..	..	..	2	9
83	100	..	10	6	..	..	..
84	100	1	8	..	..	..	..
85	112	3	3	..	..	..	..
86	100	..	..	..	..	11	..
87	100	..	..	..	2	3	..
88	100	..	..	..	..	4	..
89	100	..	11	3	..	..	..
90	100	..	8	2	..	..	..
91	100	1	2	10	..	..	..
92	100	1	7	..	..	..	..
93	100	..	6	6	..	..	..
94	100	..	2	7	..	..	..
95	100	..	10	10	..	..	..
96	100	..	..	5	..	..	..
97	100	1	4	3	..	..	..
98	100	1	4	11	..	..	..
99	100	1	9	1	..	..	..
100	100	3	10	7	..	..	..
101	100	2	9	4	..	..	..
102	100	..	..	..	1	..	2
103	100	2	..	8	..	..	..
104	100	1	5	1	..	..	..
105	100	..	..	..	1	2	6
106	100	..	8	6	..	..	..
107	100	..	..	..	..	3	10
108	100	..	11	1	..	..	..
109	100	2	5	4	..	..	8
110	100	..	..	..	..	11	8
111	100	2	..	5	..	..	..
112	100	..	11	4	..	..	..
113	100	..	..	..	..	7	4
114	100	..	..	..	3	5	4

Descents of Land below the Lake.					Heights of Land above the Lake.		
Number of Levels.	Distance, in Yards, at which each Level was taken.	Feet.	Inch.	Lines.	Feet.	Inch.	Lines.
115	100	..	..	..	2	..	7
116	100	..	..	..	..	3	..
117	100	..	11	4	..	..	..
118	100	..	8	..	..	..	..
119	100	..	9	3	..	..	..
120	100	1	..	..	..	..	..
121	100	2	5	2	..	..	..
122	100	..	..	..	..	11	3
123	100	2	2	..	..	..	..
124	100	..	11	8	..	..	..
125	100	..	..	..	3	3	..
126	100	..	..	..	..	5	6
127	100	..	2	6	..	..	..
128	100	..	7	2	..	..	..
129	100	3	2	7	..	..	..
130	100	..	9	11	..	..	..
131	100	..	..	10	..	..	..
132	100	2	2	7	..	..	..
133	100	..	4	..	..	..	..
134	100	..	..	..	..	2	9
135	120	1	4	5	..	..	..
136	100	..	3	2	..	..	..
137	100	1	8	1	..	..	..
138	100	1	11	6	..	..	..
139	100	3	6	..	..	..	..
140	100	..	..	..	1	2	9
141	100	2	9	8	..	..	..
142	100	1	1	10	..	..	..
143	100	5	4	..	..	..	..
144	100	..	..	..	..	11	..
145	100	2	3	8	..	..	..
146	75	2	..	..	..	..	..
147	100	..	..	..	6	3	..
148	100	..	..	..	..	2	8
149	100	..	..	..	2	10	7
150	100	3	4	2	..	..	..
151	100	2	3	..	..	..	..
152	100	..	..	4	..	..	..
153	100	1	..	8	..	..	..
154	100	..	5	5	..	..	..
155	100	1	5	3	..	..	..
156	100	..	11	5	..	..	..
157	100	1	9	5	..	..	..
158	100	1	10	9	..	..	..
159	100	..	..	..	1	9	4
160	100	4	3	4	..	..	..
161	100	..	..	..	..	1	..

Descents of Land below the Lake.					Heights of Land above the Lake.		
Number of Levels.	Distance, in Yards, at which each Level was taken.	Feet.	Inch.	Lines.	Feet.	Inch.	Lines.
162	100	..	..	..	..	6	5
163	100	8	1	2	..	..	..
164	75	3	..	10	..	..	..
165	100	..	..	..	3	6	..
166	100	..	..	..	6	11	1
167	100	4	1	2	..	..	..
168	100	1	2	9	..	..	..
169	100	3	6	4	..	..	..
170	100	..	..	..	4	5	6
171	100	3	..	3	..	..	..
172	100	2	5	10	..	..	..
173	100	7	..	8	..	..	..
174	75	6	4	5	..	..	..
175	50	9	7	..	..	..	..
176	75	6	..	10	..	..	..
177	75	..	..	..	2	2	8
178	75	..	..	..	8	3	1
179	75	..	..	..	8	5	..
180	100	..	..	..	7	2	4
181	68	9	6	4	..	..	..
182	50	..	..	..	3	10	2
183	50	8	4	..	..	..	..
184	38	9	..	10	..	..	..
185	73	5	9	..	..	..	..
186	100	1	11	9	..	..	..
187	100	2	1	..	..	..	..
188	100	..	..	..	..	..	8
189	100	6	9	..	..	..	..
190	70	..	..	..	..	..	..
191	100	10	5	6	5	9	4
192	100	5	7	6	..	..	..
193	100	2	6	5	..	..	..
194	100	2	3	2	..	..	..
195	100	..	..	..	7	3	5
196	100	..	..	..	1	5	1
197	22	11	..	..	..	..	..
198	65	4	5	6	..	..	..
199	42	..	..	..	7	..	..
200	38	..	..	..	15	8	..
201	70	7	10	6	..	..	..
202	100	..	2	1	..	..	..
203	100	5	1	..	..	..	..
204	25	9	6	5	..	..	..
205	41	10	6	8	..	..	..
206	166	5	8	6	..	..	..
207	79	7	9	10	..	..	..
208	100	6	10	5	..	..	..

Descents of Land below the Lake.					Heights of Land above the Lake.		
Number of Levels.	Distance, in Yards, at which each Level was taken.	Feet.	Inch.	Lines.	Feet.	Inch.	Lines.
209	80	9	10	4	..	..	..
210	100	5	..	..	..	..	..
211	84	7	1	10	..	..	..
212	100	2	11	1	..	..	..
213	100	..	..	..	..	2	6
214	100	5	9	2	..	..	..
215	100	2	11	7	..	..	..
216	120	5	1	5	..	..	..
217	70	9	11	8	..	..	..
218	64	3	5	1	..	..	..
219	88	..	..	..	19	1	..
220	100	5	1	11	..	..	..
221	150	..	8	..	..	..	..
222	40	21	6	..	..	..	..
223	36	7	1	..	..	..	..
224	32	6	6	9	..	..	..
225	50	5	11	8	..	..	..
226	54	2	..	..	..	..	..
227	83	..	..	..	2	6	4
228	100	..	..	..	..	10	..
229	100	2	4	8	..	..	..
230	100	5	..	3	..	..	..
231	132	..	..	..	3	..	10
232	100	..	..	..	..	1	7
233	100	..	..	..	8	7	10
234	100	..	..	..	5	7	3
235	100	..	..	..	..	11	..
236	100	..	..	..	1	2	..
237	100	..	..	..	..	10	2
238	100	..	..	..	1	2	8
239	131	..	..	..	5	..	6
240	100	1	2	2	..	..	..
241	100	..	11	4	..	..	..
242	100	1	6	..	..	..	..
243	100	..	..	..	1	..	..
244	100	6	10	6	..	..	..
245	100	4	4	..	..	..	..
246	100	..	..	..	7	1	11
247	100	..	..	..	2	9	10
248	112	..	..	..	8	6	..
249	100	..	..	..	8	..	4
250	100	4	8	10	..	..	..
251	100	..	..	..	2	4	6
252	100	..	..	..	4	5	4
253	100	..	..	..	4	2	3
254	100	..	..	..	2	3	10
255	100	..	..	..	3	10	..

Descents of Land below the Lake.					Heights of Land above the Lake.		
Number of Levels.	Distance, in Yards, at which each Level was taken.	Feet.	Inch.	Lines.	Feet.	Inch.	Lines.
256	100	..	..	..	3	3	11
257	100	..	..	..	2	5	..
258	100	..	..	..	3	10	4
259	100	..	..	..	..	6	7
260	100	..	..	..	3	10	..
261	100	..	..	..	1	3	2
262	100	..	..	..	2	11	3
263	100	..	..	..	1	1	9
264	100	..	..	..	1	8	..
265	100	..	..	..	1	8	5
266	100	..	..	..	2	8	..
267	100	..	..	..	2	10	2
268	100	4	5	..	..	..	..
269	100	..	..	..	2	3	10
270	100	..	..	..	1	7	1
271	100	1	7	1	..	..	..
272	100	..	..	..	4	8	..
273	100	..	..	..	2	9	2
274	100	5	2	3	..	..	..
275	100	..	..	..	6	1	..
276	100	..	..	..	2	7	7
277	100	..	..	..	3	1	9
278	120	..	..	..	9	4	7
279	62	5	6	..	..	..	..
280	90	6	2	3	..	..	..
281	100	2	3	2	..	..	..
282	33	11	1	10	..	..	..
283	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
284	15	11	6	6	..	..	..
285	13	11	7	7	..	..	..
286	17	11	7	5	..	..	..
287	33	..	..	..	9	..	1
288	21	..	..	..	12	..	..
289	76	..	..	..	4	7	5
290	100	5	10	5	..	..	..
291	100	8	4	..	..	..	..
292	100	2	4	1	..	..	..
293	100	..	..	..	3	4	9
294	100	..	..	..	2	5	4
295	100	1	..	5	..	..	..
296	100	2	4	..	..	..	..
297	100	..	..	..	4	3	6
298	100	..	..	..	3	10	..
299	100	..	..	..	6	10	..
300	100	..	..	..	4	1	9
301	100	..	4	3	..	..	..
302	100	4	8	6	..	..	..

Descents of Land below the Lake.					Heights of Land above the Lake.		
Number of Levels.	Distance, in Yards, at which each Level was taken.	Feet.	Inch.	Lines.	Feet.	Inch.	Lines.
303	100	..	..	..	2	4	2
304	100	..	..	..	5	11	..
305	100	2	7	3	..	..	..
306	100	1	4	6	..	..	..
307	100	1	..	7	..	..	..
308	80	..	..	..	..	10	6
309	100	..	..	..	2	11	6
310	100	..	..	..	1	7	3
311	100	..	..	..	1	10	5
312	100	..	..	..	1	2	5
313	100	2	3	..	..	..	..
314	90	3	6	8	..	..	..
315	50	..	..	..	10	2	8
316	100	..	..	..	5	4	7
317	100	..	..	..	..	8	3
318	100	..	..	..	2	11	6
319	100	1	5	4	..	..	..
320	100	1	9	..	..	..	..
321	100	1	7	5	..	..	..
322	100	..	..	..	6	5	2
323	100	..	..	..	3	6	4
324	100	2	11	4	..	..	..
325	82	..	..	..	7	7	..
326	65	..	..	..	5	..	4
327	100	..	..	..	3	10	10
328	90	1	8	..	..	..	..
329	100	..	..	..	5	2	8
330	100	..	..	..	3	8	5
331	90	..	..	..	..	6	6
332	90	..	..	..	2	4	3
333	100	..	..	..	..	10	2
334	95	..	4	8	..	..	..
335	100	3	7	10	..	..	..
336	85	..	..	..	7	9	2
337	100	..	..	..	4	11	..
338	100	..	..	..	1	10	..
339	95	..	..	..	1	4	6
340	100	..	..	..	3	..	..
341	100	1	2	4	..	..	..
342	100	..	10	5	..	..	..
343	100	1	..	7	..	..	..
344	100	..	..	..	1	7	8
345	100	..	..	..	1	3	..
346	34	..	..	..	7	4	11
347	85	..	..	..	11	..	..

The above is Copy of a Plan in the Archives of the Republic.

1st July, 1825. G. A. THOMPSON.

N.B. By the foregoing Table it appears that there were taken 347 Levels at about 100 yards apart.

	Feet.	In.	Lines.
The aggregate Amount of the Descents of Land between the South Sea and the Lake were	604	9	6
The aggregate Amount of the Heights of Land between the South Sea and the Lake were	470	9	11
Making an excess of Descents above the Heights of..... Feet	133	11	7

or forty-four yards, one foot, eleven inches and a half; which calculation is the Level of the Lake, at high water, above the average height of land between the Lake and the South Sea: but it should also be remarked, that, although, in all the maps extant, THIS TRACT IS REPRESENTED AS MOUNTAINOUS, the greatest actual height of any part of the above land is only nineteen feet one inch, as appears by the Level, Number 219, in this Table. The distance between the Lake and the sea, at the proposed communication, is, by the above measurement of 32,687 yards, only 4 leagues 4,687 yards, of 7,000 yards Spanish to the league.

TABLE OF COINAGE

IN

THE MINT OF GUATEMALA.

Years.	Marks of Silver.	Marks of Gold.	Value in Dollars.
1820	41,309 0 5		351,127 1½
1821	45,808 7 5		389,376 0¾
1822	16,214 2 5		137,821 6¼
1823	34,628 2 3	146 0 3 0	314,202 7
1824	6,475 0 5	526 0 2 0	126,578 3½
From January to 12th July, 1825	12,155 3 1	253 1 2 3	137,751 1
Totals	156,591 1 0	925 1 7 3	1,456,857 3½

N.B. Subsequent to the Revolution, the whole amount of the precious metals raised in Guatemala, after adding, for contraband exportation, two-thirds to the amount coined, does not exceed one million of dollars per annum.

of Jauregui, a Omoa Cubal with a Victoria, 1829 vol III p 238 his papers with full names.

LIST
OF
THE CHIEF FAMILIES
IN THE
CITY OF GUATEMALA,
WITH AN ESTIMATED VALUE OF THEIR FORTUNES, PROPERTIES, AND EMPLOYMENTS.

Names.	Nature of Property.	Value of Do. Dollars.
A-z-n--a	Trade, Estates	750,000
A-t-r--s	Trade, Estates	750,000
A--v-l--g-s	Estates	75,000
A--r-s	Trade, Estates	275,000
B-t--s	Sugar mills	500,000
B--l-s	Indigo, Trade	600,000
B--g-c--a	Trade	100,000
B-t-r-s	Trade	50,000
B-r--t-a	Estates	20,000
B-r-t--n--a	Estates	30,000
C-st--s	Trade	200,000
C-b-la	Trade	75,000
C-v-d---s	Estates, Indigo, &c.	100,000
C--q--r	Estates	50,000
E-h-v-r--a	Trade	150,000
E-h-v-r--a	Trade	25,000
E-p-n-l	Trade	75,000
F-n-l-s	Trade (much decayed.)	150,000

Names.	Nature of Property.	Value of Do. Dollars.
G--n-d-s.....	Trade, Indigo, Estates.....	650,000
I--t-r--s	Estates	150,000
I--g-y-n	Trade	40,000
L-r-z-b-l	Chiefly situations under government	15,000
M-l-n	Trade, ...	150,000
M-c---s	Estates	50,000
M--t-f-r.....	Chiefly situations under government	10,000
N-g-r-a.....	Trade, Estates	150,000
O--v-r-s	Trade, Estates.....	750,000
Do. (one of them Alcalde.)	Trade, Estates.....	125,000
P-v-n-s	Trade, Indigo, & Cattle estates...	1,250,000
P-r-s	Estates	50,000
P-l-m-s	Law Counsellor.....	20,000
S-r-v-a	Estates	25,000
V-l-e	Estates	45,000
V--d-r-s	Trade, Estates.....	300,000
V-n--s.....	Trade	25,000
	Dollars	7,780,000

Equal in sterling to £1,556,000.

N. B. The value of the fortunes, properties, and employments are herein rated considerably under the scale represented to me by parties who had opportunities of being well informed on their nature and extent.

DENOMINATIONS

OF

FIFTEEN CASTS OF MESCLADOS OR MUSTEES,

Taken by the Author, from Pictures, in a Gallery of the House of DONA MANUELA SARCO, at San Angel, three leagues from Mexico, the 16th of April 1825.

Mestisa.. born of a Spaniard and Indian woman.
Castisa .....a Mestisa woman and Spaniard.
Española .....a Castiso and Spanish woman.
Mulato.....a Spanish woman and negro.
Morisco .....a Mulata woman and Spaniard.
Albina .....a Morisco and Spanish woman.
Tornatras.....an Albino and Spanish woman.
Tenteenelaire....a Tornatras and Spanish woman.
Lovo .....an Indian woman and negro.
Caribujo.....an Indian woman and Lovo.
Barsino .....a Coyote and Mulata woman.
Grifo .....a Negro woman and Lovo.

Albarazado .....a Coyote and Indian woman.
Chanisa .....a Mestisa woman and Indian.
Mechino. .....a Lova woman and Coyote.

EXPORTS

TO THE

SOUTH AMERICAN REPUBLICS.

The official value of goods exported from Great Britain to Mexico in

	1822 was	90,692
	1825....	1,409,356
to Colombia	1822....	27,572
	1825....	651,103
Rio de Plata	1822....	230,839
	1824....	1,581,774

With Brazil a steady increasing commerce, both for exports and imports, has been kept up, with the exception of 1826, in which year, the exports to all the countries in South America fell off nearly one half, owing to the over excitement of 1825, and the consequently sudden depression of the following year.

The exports to Brazil in 1825 were 4,196,872
1826....2,593,730
1827....3,822,432

The total amount of exports from Great Britain, of British and foreign merchandize, to every part of South America was as follows:

1822.....3,990,344
1823.....5,802,437
1824.....7,857,610
1825.....8,082,551
1826.....4,531,094
1827.....6,602,163

thus shewing a steady and progressive increase (with the exception above stated) for the whole period. The proportion of colonial and foreign merchandize, included under the general head, is rather less than one thirtieth part.

IMPORTS

FROM THE SOUTH AMERICAN REPUBLICS.

The official value of the imports into Great Britain from Mexico and the states of South America was, in

1822....	£1,541,218
1823....	1,733,803
1824....	2,084,916
1825....	2,630,408
1826....	1,263,650
1827....	1,752,461

SUMS VOTED

FOR THE SPECIAL COMMISSIONS TO SPANISH AMERICA.

			£
For 1823 and 1824	£23,500		
1825	30,000	also for consuls	35,000
1826	60,000	..... do	40,000
1827	79,000	..... do	35,000
1828	79,000	..... do	32,000
	271,500		142,000
			271,500
Total for commissions and consulships..			£413,500

ROUTE

FROM THE

PORT OF ACAJUTLA IN THE SOUTH SEA

TO

SANTIAGO,

THE CAPITAL OF GUATEMALA.

	Leagues.
To Sonsonate, a considerable town	3
Naquisalco, large Indian town	2
Salpotetan, Indian village	2
Apaneca, village of Mustees	2
Aguachapa, large town of Mustees	4
Zopilote, Indian hamlet.....	5
Oratorio, Indian hamlet.....	6
Esclavos, small Indian town	6
Zuaquiniquiniquilapa, small Indian town....	8
Los Arcos, poor hamlet.....	5
Santiago, the capital	7
The distance is, in leagues of 7,000 Spanish yards each	48

ROUTE

FROM

SANTIAGO,

THE CAPITAL OF GUATEMALA,

TO THE

PORT OF IZABAL,

IN THE GOLFO DULCE.

	Leagues.
To San José, a poor hamlet	9
Omohita, farm of Señora Morales.....	6
Guastatoia, farm of Don Manuel Morales ..	10
Chimalapan, pretty Indian village.....	10
Zacapa, city of Spaniards and Mustees	7
San Pablo, poor Indian village	4
Zinzin, Indian hamlet	3
Gualan, considerable town of Mustees.....	8
Iguana, small farm-house	4
Encuentros, very small Indian village	5
Mico, a few huts with farming establishments	6
Izabal, sea-port, Indians and Mustees	4
The distance is, in leagues of 7,000 Spanish yards each	76

THE END.

G. Woodfall, Printer,
Angel Court, Skinner Street, London.

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